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D. IOANNIS HALES Colleg. Eton. Socij
et Eccles. Colleg. Windsorien sis Canonici.

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A

TRACT

Concerning the

SIN

Againſt the

Holy Ghoſt.

By the ever Memorable

Mr. *JOHN HALES*,

of *Eton Colledge*, &c.

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SEVERAL

TRACTS,

By the ever memorable

Mr. JOHN HALES

Of *Eaton* Coll. &c.

VIZ.

I. Of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.
II. Paraphraſe on St. *Matthew's* Goſpel.
III. Of the Power of the Keys.
IV. Of Schiſm and Schiſmaticks, (*Never before printed by the Original Copy.*)
V. Miſcellanies.

Printed in the Year, 1677.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

A TRACT concerning the SIN againſt the HOLY GHOST.

MAny have Written of the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, and in defining or deſcribing of it, follow their own zealous conceits, and not the Canon of Holy Scriptures. The more dreadful the Sin is, the more fearful we muſt be, in charging it upon any ſpecial crime, or particular perſon. In defining a ſin of ſo heynous a nature, direct and evident proof

from Scripture is requiſite. It is not enough to conſider, (as many do) what ſins are moſt deſperate and deadly, and therefore to conclude ſuch ſins are againſt the Holy Ghoſt. Thus indeed the Schoolmen have done, who have made ſix differences of this ſin, without any ground or warrant from Scripture for ſo doing. And *Bellarmine* is ſo liberal in beſtowing on ſuch as he calls Hereticks, that his opinion is, that a Man can ſcarce be a learned Proteſtant, without committing the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt. Neither are the Papiſts the only Men that are miſtaken about this ſin: but too many Divines of the Reformed Churches, have ſtarted aſide from the Scripture, and have given us ſuch intricate and contradictory

V. in fine.

dictory definitions of this ſin, as tend only to the perplexing the tender Conſciences of weak Chriſtians. To make good this Cenſure, I will briefly ſet down ſo much touching this ſin, as I conceive is warranted by the Word of God, and humbly ſubmit to the judgment of the Learned.

The Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt, was an evil ſpeaking of, or ſlandering of the Miracles which our Saviour did, by thoſe, who though they were convinced by the Miracles, to believe that ſuch Works could not be done, but by the power of God, yet they did malitiouſly ſay, they were wrought by the power of the Devil.

In this Definition, theſe points are obſervable.

1. I forbear to call it the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, but the Blaſphemy; for though every Blaſphemy be a ſin in general, yet our Saviour Chriſt, terms it the Blaſphemy. And the Evangeliſts do all agree, to give it the ſame term: and 'tis now here in holy Scripture called the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt; and yet it appears both in *St. Mathew* and *St. Mark*, that there was juſt occaſion offered to our Saviour to call it ſo; where he compares it with the ſin againſt the Son of Man; but he forbears to call it any thing, but the Blaſphemy; thereby, no doubt, to teach us, it conſiſteth only in curſed ſpeaking and Blaſpheming. A ſerious conſideration of this point, may teach us ſo much moderation, as to confine

confine our ſelves to that term which our Saviour in the three Evangeliſts hath preſcribed unto us. I cannot find that any Man that hath writ upon this Argument, hath made any obſervation, or noted this phraſe and term uſed by the Evangeliſts, in pronouncing the dreadful ſentence of our Saviour againſt the Blaſphemy of the Holy Ghoſt, I will cite theſe Texts, where it is named, *Math.* 12. 31. *Mark* 3. 28 *Luke* 12 10.

2. A ſecond Obſervation is, That Blaſphemy is a ſpeaking againſt another, as both *St. Matthew* and *St. Luke* expound the word, for in the Original, it is a blaſting the Fame, or *blaming* of another; for from the Greek word Βλασφημέω both the *French*

Nation and our *Engliſh* by contraction have made the word blame.

3. To paſs from the Name to the Thing it ſelf, we may obſerve by the coherence of the Texts, that Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt, was ſpoken of by our Saviour, concerning the Scribes and Phariſees. It was (ſaith *St. Mark*) becauſe the Phariſees ſaid, he had an unclean ſpirit, and that he caſt out Devils by *Belzebub*, *&c.* This ſpeech of the Phariſees, whereby they ſlandered his Miracles, wrought by the power of the Holy Ghoſt, is properly the Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt. How tranſcendent a crime it was, to traduce that power by which our Saviour wrought his Miracles, may appear

pear, from the end for which theſe Miracles were wrought; which was, to prove to the people that ſaw them, that he was the *Meſſias*; which is evident from the places of Scripture, wherein he appealed to his works, 10 *Joh.* 37. 38. 14. *Joh.* 11. 11 *Math.* 4. 4. *Joh.* 29. Theſe and other places ſhew, that the working of Miracles, was an act of the moſt glorious manifeſtation of the power of God, by which at the firſt view, the ſimpleſt people were led by their outward ſenſe, to the great myſtery of inward Faith in Chriſt their Redeemer.

Therefore, for thoſe men that were eye-witneſſes of thoſe Miracles which did make them know that Chriſt was a Teacher come from

from God, to Blaſpheme that power, by which theſe Miracles were wrought, and to ſay they were done by the help of the Devil, was the moſt ſpightful and malicious ſlander that could be invented; for thereby they attempted, as much as in them lay, to deſtroy the very principles of Faith, and to prevent the very firſt propagation of the Goſpel, to the univerſal miſchief of all Mankind. And though theſe Phariſees were no Chriſtians, and therefore could not fall away from faith, which they never had, yet they did know and believe that Chriſt was a Teacher come from God; for ſo our Saviour tells them, 7 *Joh.* 28. Ye both know me, and whence I am. They did not believe him as a Saviour,

but

but as a great Prophet from God; (as the *Mahometans* do at this very day) they truſted to be ſaved by their Law, and becauſe he taught ſuch things as did abrogate their Law, in which they ſo much gloried, they were ſo malicious to his Doctrine, which they did not believe, that they ſpoke evil of his Miracles which they did believe; leaſt the people by approving his Miracles, ſhould believe his Doctrine.

4. Obſerve, that its ſaid to be Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt, becauſe, by the Holy Ghoſt, the Miracles were wrought *Math.* 12 28. 1 *Cor* 12. 10.

5. The Blaſphemy againſt the Son of Man was, when men conſidered Chriſt as a mere man, and did diſgracefully tax his converſation,

verſation, by ſaying, behold a glutton, a bibber of Wine, a friend to Publicans and ſinners. But the Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt, was, when Men beholding Chriſts Miracles, did enviouſly aſcribe them to the Devil, which they knew and believed to be done by Gods power.

6. The Texts formerly cited out of the three Evangeliſts, being all the places wherein the Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt is named; we cannot find by them, that we have any ſafe rule to conclude, that any but the Scribes and Phariſees, and their confederates, committed that ſin. I dare not ſay, that *Judas*, *Julian* the Apoſtate, or *Simon Magus*, or thoſe that ſtoned *Stephen*, were guilty thereof.

7. The

7. The Apoſtles have not in any of their Epiſtles once mentioned this Blaſphemy, and yet they were moſt careful and frequent in exhortations from all ſorts of ſin: It were much therefore if they ſhould omit or forget ſuch a fearful crime, without often and preciſe admoniſhing to beware of it. And though negative proofs from Scripture, are not demonſtrative, yet the general ſilence of the Apoſtles, may at leaſt help to infer a probability, that the Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt, is not committable by any Chriſtian, which lived not in the time of our Saviour. As for thoſe Texts in the ſixth and tenth Chapter to the *Hebrews*, and in 1 *John* 5. 16. (which by late Divines are expoun-

expounded of the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt) I do not find that the Ancient Fathers did ſo underſtand them, excepting only *St. Auſtine*, who ſo interprets that one place in *St. John*, that all men confeſs him to be in an error. There be three Texts in the Epiſtles, wherein although the Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt be not named, yet, moſt think, it is intended and meant. And *Bellarmine* confuting *St. Auſtin's* opinion, who held, that final impenitency was the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt) affirms, that it ſeems the three Texts in the Epiſtles, are ſpoken of that ſin; and yet this great Cardinal forgetting what he had ſaid in the ſame Chapter contradicts himſelf, and ſhews how that thoſe three

three places are not to be interpreted of that ſin. I will cite the Texts, and then his interpretation of them, according to the expoſition of *St. Ambroſe*, *Chryſoſtom*, *Hierom*, and other Fathers, as he ſaith.

The firſt is *Heb.* 6. It is impoſſible, *&c.* The Apoſtle here ſpeaks only of Repentance, which did go before Baptiſme, for ſo *Chryſoſtome* and *Ambroſe*, *&c.* expound it; which the Apoſtle intimates in theſe words. Which were once enlightened, that is, Baptized, for anciently, to be illuminated, ſignified to be Baptized. Secondly, in theſe words (to renew again) for we are properly renewed in Baptiſme. Thirdly, in theſe (crucifying the Son of God afreſh) for when

when we are Baptized, we are conformed to the likeneſs of his death, 6 *Rom.* And as Chriſt was only once crucified, ſo alſo we are only once Baptized; and he that will be again Baptized, ſhould again crucifie to himſelf Chriſt. Let me add this, that in the verſes next before this Text, the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the foundation of Repentance, and the Doctrine of Baptiſme. And in this Text, our new Tranſlation followeth *Beza* (who hath varied from the Original, by putting the conditional *Si*, *If*, inſtead of the Copulative *Et*, *And*, and by adding the Cauſal *Ut*.) ſo that whereas *Beza* and our Tranſlation is, *ſi prolabantur ut crucifigant*, The Greek, and vulgar Latine is, καὶ παραπεσόντας ἀνασταυροῦντας, *prolapſi ſunt*

ſunt crucifigentes; for the word doth not ſignify to fall away, but to fall caſually or negligently, ſo παράπτωμα *Galat* 6. is tranſlated fault, but not falling away.

The ſecond Text is, *Hebrews* 10. 26. For if we ſin willingly or wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remains no more ſacrifice for ſin. Anſwer, I ſay with *Chryſoſtom*, *Ambroſe*, and other Fathers; The ſence is, we muſt not expect another Chriſt to dye for us, or that he that dyed once, ſhould come again to dye for us.

The third Text, 1 *Joh* 5. 16. There is a ſin unto death: I do not ſay ye ſhall pray for it; *St. Hierom* ſaith, that nothing elſe is here meant, but that a Prayer for a ſin unto death, is very hard-

ly or difficultly heard; and this seems to be the truest sense of this place: for *St. John* saith, in the verse immediately before, we know we have the Petitions we desire of him; therefore least we should think this to hold true in all Petitions even for others, he adds, if any Man see his Brother sin a sin, which is not unto death, he shall ask, *&c.* he shall ask, that is, let him ask with confidence, for he shall obtain; but if it be a sin unto death, that is, a great sin, such an one as is not ordinarily pardoned, but punished with death: I do not say, ye shall pray for it, that is I dare not promise that you shall easily obtain, and therefore I do not say that you shall pray for it, that is, with that confidence of obtaining;

ing;for often in ſuch caſes, God doth notheat the Prayers of his Saints;as God ſaith, *Jer.* 7. 16. If theſe expoſitions upon the former Texts be found, the Definition of the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, cannot be grounded upon all or any of them:for as it is not named, ſo it is not meant in any of them; but if they ſeem to any to be unſound, let him bring better and more agreeable to the literal meaning and ſence, coherence and ſcope of the Text, and I ſhall gladly learn. It ſeems a probable expoſition of the firſt place, *Heb.* 6. that a learned Divine, who produceth this Text for proof of his definition of the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, doth confeſs againſt himſelf, that the Apoſtle in this place denieth a ſe-

cond Baptiſme, where he ſpeak-eth of Repentance, becauſe they are mentioned together in the ſame place, and have ſome affinity and correſpondence. As for the ſecond Text, *Heb.* 10. I muſt ſay, that if *St. Paul* in this place, meant the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, that then this were the only deſperate Text in the whole Bible, for what Man is there that ſins not willingly; for ſo the word ἑκουσίως properly ſignifies: *Beza* tranſlates it *ultrò*, the vulgar Latine, *voluntariè*, or willingly, not wilfully, or obſtinately. It is but a miſerable ſhift, when *St. Paul* ſaith, if we ſin willingly, for Mr *Calvin* to tell us, that the Text doth not mean every willing ſin, but only a malitious reſiſting of the Truth. Could

Could not *St. Paul*, as eaſily as Mr *Calvin*, have ſaid, If we ſin malitiouſly, as ſay, if we ſin willingly? My comfort is, that if the Text be adviſedly conſidered, there is no ſuch thing as the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, or any other deſperate concluſion, to be found in the Text; the ſcope of the precedent verſes do evidently expound the Apoſtles meaning to be this, to let the *Jews* know, that the caſe was not now with them, as it was under the Law; for under the Law they had daily ſacrifice for ſin, but now under the Goſpel they had but one ſacrifice, once for all; every Prieſt ſtandeth daily miniſtring and offering often times the ſame ſacrifice, but this Man after he had offered one

ſacrifice, for ever ſate down at the right hand of God, as it is, verſe 11. of that Chapter, which may ſerve for a comment upon the Verſe now in queſtion. And it is worth our noting, that the Text doth not ſay, if we ſin wilfully, there is no ſacrifice for ſin; this had been an hard ſaying indeed; but the words are, there remains no more ſacrifice for ſin: there is ſome comfortable difference, I hope, between theſe two propoſitions; there is no ſacrifice, and there remains no more ſacrafice for ſin: So that if we do not believe in that one ſacrifice, as ſufficient, but look every day for ſome new ſacrifice for every new ſin, we muſt expect nothing but judgment.

As to the third place, 1 *Joh.* 5. 16.

5. 16. many would conclude, there is a ſin for which we may not pray; Firſt, becauſe it is irremiſſable, and this they think muſt needs be the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, meant by *St. John*, Their beſt argument is, *John's* not ſaying we ſhould pray, is a ſaying we ſhould not pray; his ſilence to them is prohibition. This is bad Grammar, and worſe Logick. For we find, that *St. Stephen* prayed for them that ſtoned him, and yet told them they reſiſted the Holy Ghoſt. And *St. Peter* exhorted *Simon Magus* to Repentance, and yet both he and thoſe that ſtoned *Stephen*, are commonly reputed ſinners againſt the Holy Ghoſt. *St. Ambroſe* is of that charitable opinion, that he thinks the ſin againſt the

Holy Ghoſt may be pardoned by Repentance, becauſe the people of the *Jews*, that had ſaid of Chriſt, that he caſt out Devils by *Belzebub*, afterwards at the preaching of *St. Peter*, are ſaid to be converted, *Acts* 2. *St. Auſtine* in a Retract concludes, we muſt deſpair of no Man, no not of the wickedeſt, as long as he liveth; and we ſafely pray for him, of whom we don't deſpair. For though it be expreſly ſaid, That the Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt ſhall not be forgiven, yet theſe words may juſtly receive a qualification, if we will but allow the ſame mitigation of theſe words, which all Men confeſs we muſt needs allow to the precedent words in the ſame verſe, to which theſe have relation; where

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it is ſaid generally, all Sins, and all Blaſphemies ſhall be forgiven, it cannot be meant of all ſins always, and to all Men, for then no ſin could be damnable, but the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, which is moſt falſe; and therefore the meaning muſt be, all ſins ſhall be forgiven ordinarily, and for the moſt part; ſo on the contrary, Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt ſhall not ordinarily, but hardly be forgiven. Even thoſe who are moſt ſtrict to maintain the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, to be unpardonable, will yet acknowledge, that ſometimes in Scripture, Impoſſibility is uſed to note a difficulty, and thoſe things are ſpoken indefinitely to all, which belong but to a part only. Thus the difficulty of a rich

rich Mans entering into the Kingdome of Heaven, is presented to us by our Saviour, under the similitude of an impossibility.

Having dispatch'd these Texts of Scripture which do either name, or are thought to concern, the sin against the Holy Ghost, it remains to examine those common Definitions of this sin which are now current; though different in the terms by which they define it; some call it a total or final falling away from faith, or a wilful Apostacy, or a malicious resisting of the truth; yet when they come to explain their meaning, the difference among them is not considerable. I shall chiefly apply my self to Mr *Calvin's* definition, because his judgment hath gained

ed the greateſt reputation among the multitude; as alſo, for that he himſelf promiſes ſuch a true definition, as ſhall eaſily, by it ſelf overthrow all the reſt. In his *Inſtitut. Lib.* 2. *Chap.* 3. he ſaith, they ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, *Qui divinæ veritati (cujus fulgore ſic perſtringuntur ut ignorantiam cauſari nequeunt) tamen deſtinata malitia reſiſtunt, in hoc tantum, ut reſiſtant.* *Arminius* alſo uſeth Mr *Calvins* words. The Rhetorical Parentheſis, which might well have been ſpared in a definition, being reduced to plain and brief terms; this definition of *Calvin* may be thus Engliſhed, They ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, who of determined malice, reſiſt the known Truth of God, to the end only to reſiſt. In this

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Mr *Calvin* doth not define what the ſin is, but who they are that commit it; whereas by the Rules of Logick, *Concretes* admit of no definition, but only *Abſtracts*. But taking the definition as it is, it conſiſts principally upon theſe three terms. Firſt, Truth; Secondly, Known; Thirdly, Reſiſted; or a reſiſting of the known Truth. The words being general and doubtful, we will conſider them ſingly.

Firſt, If by the truth Mr *Calvin* underſtands the Word of God, or the whole Doctrine revealed in the Scriptures, then the ſenſe of this Term will be too large: for even the Phariſees which ſpoke againſt the Holy Ghoſt, did not reſiſt the whole Truth of God in the Scripture, for

for they believed in the Law of *Moſes*, and had confidence to be ſaved by the keeping of it. And in defence of that Law, (as they thought) they did Blaſpheme the Holy Ghoſt. Therefore properly by the Truth of God, Mr *Calvin* muſt confine his meaning to the Truth of the Goſpel or Doctrine of Faith, for ſo both he himſelf and others expound themſelves, by terming the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, a falling away, or turning away from Faith, or Apoſtacy.

Secondly, By this word Known, Mr *Calvin* muſt mean belief, for Faith is properly by believing, not knowing the truth.

Thirdly, The Word, Reſiſting, muſt mean unbelieving: for if receiving of the Truth be by be-

belief, then Reſiſting of the Truth muſt be unbelief. And indeed Mr. *Calvin* explains himſelf in the ſame Chapter, ſaying, there is no place for pardon where knowledge is joyned with unbelief, *Non eſſe veniæ locum*, &c. So then by this definition, to reſiſt the known Truth, is all one, as if Mr *Calvin* had ſaid in proper terms, for a Man at once to unbelieve that which he doth believe; which two things it is impoſſible to do together? and if they be not together, there can be no reſiſtance. It is true, that for ſome reaſons, a Man may be brought, not to believe that which he formerly believed. This cannotbe in an inſtant, but ſucceſſively unbelief comes in the place of belief. And this

may

may not be called a reſiſting, for that all reſiſtance conſiſts in a violence between two at the leaſt; but where two ſucceed one another, and are never together, it cannot poſſibly be. I confeſs a Man may reſiſt the Truth, when it is a Truth, in it ſelf only, or in the underſtanding of ſome other; but to reſiſt the Truth which is known, and believed by the reſiſter himſelf, is a direct contradiction; for the nature of Truth is ſuch, that if the underſtanding apprehend it for Truth, it cannot but aſſent unto it. No Man can force himſelf to believe what he liſts, or when he liſts. Sometimes a Man knows not what to believe, but finds a ſuſpenſion of his Faith, or trepidation

tion of his underſtanding, not knowing which way to turn. This cannot be called a reſiſting of the Truth, when the Truth is not known, but doubted of. Again, ſome Truths there be, though they be aſſented to by the underſtanding for Truths, yet they are not deſired as good; for truth is one degree nearer the Soul of Man than goodneſs. The Phariſees did apprehend the Miracles of our Saviour as true, but not as good; becauſe they tended to the derogation of their Law, which they eſteemed a better Truth. And for this cauſe, they Blaſphemed that Truth, which in their hearts they believed for Truth. For the truth of words, or ſpeech, is, (as the Schools ſay) nothing elſe but the

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ſign of truth, not truth it ſelf; for truth it ſelf is ſeated in the underſtanding, and not in the ſpeech. That Truth which the underſtanding aſſents to, the ſpeech may affirm to be falſe; there are many things believed in deed, which are denied in word: but ſuch a denial is not reſiſting, but only making ſhew of reſiſting, the Truth; for reſiſtance muſt be in the ſame place where Truth is; Truth being ſeated in the underſtanding, reſiſtance muſt be placed there alſo; the underſtanding can reſiſt no Truth, but by unbelieving of it. If Mr *Calvin* had intended of the Truth only in word, he had come one ſtep nearer to the Truth of Scripture, but he was not ſo happy in the expreſſion of

his meaning: nay his terms of Incredulity, Apoſtacy, falling away, &c. relate to a real, not verbal, Apoſtacy, and Unbelief. It remains then to my underſtanding, that Mr *Calvin* makes the reſiſtance of the Truth to be a not believing of what we do believe; which being a contradiction, he defines the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, to be ſuch a Sin, as no Man poſſibly can commit. And yet in the other extream, in expounding his own definition, he makes it ſuch a Sin, as no Man living but commits; for by his Doctrine, (as I take it) any Sin may be the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt. His words are theſe, *Quorum convicta eſt conſcientia verbum Dei eſſe quod repudiant & impugnant, impugnare*

pugnare tamen non deſiſtant, illa in ſpiritum blaſphemari dicuntur.

What Man is there that doth not daily, in ſome Point or other, forſake the word of God, and ceaſes not to impugne it, and is convinced thereof in his Conſcience: I know Mr *Calvin* was far from thinking, that *St. Paul*, did Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, and yet *St. Paul* it ſeems was convinced in his Conſcience, that it was the Word of God he fought againſt, and yet ceaſed not to fight againſt it, when he ſaith, he delighted in the Law of God, yet another Law warring againſt the Law of his mind, brought him into Captivity of the Law of Sin. What dangerous conſequences weak Conſciences may draw to themſelves,

but of this unbridled, unlimited propoſition of Mr *Calvins*, let others judge. There is a juſt cauſe I preſume to except againſt Mr *Calvin*, and all others, who in this concurr with him, to omit the term of Blaſphemy in their definitions; for this is perpetually obſerved by our Saviour in his ſpeech concerning this Sin, by the Evangeliſts with one conſent: but inſtead of the word Blaſphemy, he hath brought in the word, reſiſt, for a Genus of this Sin; but by what Authority I know not; I cannot find it, or the equivalent to it, in any of theſe places, which are thought to touch this Sin I find only falling away mentioned, *Heb.* 6. which phraſe is uſed by Mr *Calvin*, for reſiſting; whereas falling

ling away, and reſiſting, are no more alike, than fighting and runing away, which are little leſs than contraries. The laſt point I ſhall touch in Mr *Calvins* definition, is, where he ſaith, the Sinners againſt the Holy Ghoſt reſiſt, to the end only that they may reſiſt; and yet withall he tells, they reſiſt out of a determinate malice. If they reſiſt out of malice, then the end for which they reſiſt, is for the ſatisfaction of their malice. The Phariſees here condemned by our Saviour, had an other end than bare reſiſting. The defence of the Law of *Moſes*, was the end for which they Blaſphemed, and not any pleaſure they could have in the bare and ſimple act of reſiſtance. We find three old opini-

opinions, concerning the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, but they were long ſince exploded; I will but only name them. *Origen* thought, all Sins committed after Baptiſme, were Sins againſt the Holy Ghoſt: his reaſon was only a witleſs conceit of his own, That God the Father was in all things, the Son only in all reaſonable Creatures, the Holy Ghoſt in all regenerate Men. Therefore when Men Sin againſt the Divine Perſon, which is in them, if they be Heathen, they Sin againſt God the Father, or Son; if they be Chriſtians, they Sin againſt God the Holy Goſt; but this opinion is falſe. The *Novatian* Hereticks agreed with *Origen* in opinion, for they denied remiſſion of Sins to any that fell, thinking

ing all falls of Chriſtians to be Sins againſt the Holy Ghoſt; but this opinion is falſe; elſe all Sins were unpardonable to Chriſtians. Yet we find *St. Paul*, to remit the Sins of the inceſtuous *Corinthian*.

Our Saviour alſo chargeth the Phariſees with this, who were no Chriſtians. *St. Auſtin* thought final impenitency to be the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt; but final impenitency is no Blaſphemy, but only a general circumſtance, that may accompany any Sin: beſides, our Saviour intends, that this Sin may be found in this life. And the Phariſees were alive when they were accuſed of it *Pet. Lumbard*, and *Tho. Aquinas*, thought Sins of Malice, to be Sins againſt the Holy Ghoſt, and Sins of infirmity againſt the Father, and Sins of ignorance

norance againſt the Son. This opinion is falſe, becauſe the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, muſt be a Sin of ſome certain Blaſphemy, but malice is no certain Sin, but a General, and 'tis not always a Blaſphemy.

The ſix differences the Schoolmen make of the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, are theſe;

1. Envying of our Brothers Graces; 2. Impugning of the Known Truth; 3. Deſperation; 4. Obſtinacy; 5. Preſumption; 6. Final Impenitency.

In this determination of the point of Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt, and the inquiry made into Mr *Calvins* and others new definition; I hope I have delivered nothing contrary to the Articles of the Church of *England*.

FINIS.

A

TRACT

Concerning the

SACRAMENT

OF THE

Lords Supper.

By the ever Memorable

Mr. *JOHN HALES*,

of *Eaton-Colledge*, &c.

Printed, 1677.

A Tract on the Sacrament *of the* Lords Supper.

Kind SIR,

IN peruſal of your Letters together with the Schedule incloſed, no Circumſtance did ſo much move me as this, that ſo ordinary Points as are diſcuſt there, and that in a bare and ordinary manner, ſhould amuſe either your ſelf or any man elſe, that pretends to ordinary Knowledge in Controverſies in Chriſtian Religion. For the Points therein

diſcuſt are no other than the ſubject of every common Pamphlet, and ſufficiently known (that I may ſo ſay) in every Barbers Shop. Yet becauſe you require my Opinion of matters there in queſtion, I willingly afford it you, though I fear I ſhall more amuſe you with telling you the Truth, than the Diſputants there did, by abuſing you with Error. For the plain and neceſſary (though perhaps unwelcome) Truth is, that in the greater part of the Diſpute, both parties much miſtook themſelves, and that fell out which is in the cõmon Proverb, *ſc. Whilſt the one milks the Ram, the other holds under the Sieve.* That you may ſee this Truth with your Eyes, I divide your whole Diſpute into two Heads; the one concerning the *Euchariſt*, the other concerning

cerning the *Churches miſtaking it ſelf about Fundamentals.*

For the *firſt*, It conſiſteth of two parts; of a Propoſition, and of a Reply: The Propoſition expreſſes (at leaſt he that made it intended it ſo to do, though he miſtakes) the Doctrine of the Reformed Churches, concerning the preſence of Chriſt in the *Euchariſt*. The Reply doth the like for the Church of *Rome* in the ſame Argument. Now that you may ſee how indifferently I walk, I will open the miſtakes of both parties, that ſo the truth of the thing it ſelf (being unclouded of Errors) may the more clearly ſhine forth.

The firſt miſtake common to both is, That they ground themſelves much upon the words of Conſecration, as they are called,

and ſuppoſe, That upon the pronouncing of thoſe words, ſomething befalls that action, which otherwiſe would not; and that without thoſe words the action were lame. *Sir*, I muſt confeſs my ignorance unto you. I find no ground for the neceſſity of this doing. Our Saviour inſtituting that Holy Ceremony, commands us to do what he did, leaves us no Precept of ſaying any words; neither will it be made appear, that either the bleſſed Apoſtles, or Primitive Chriſtians had any ſuch Cuſtom: Nay the contrary will be made probably to appear out of ſome of the antienteſt Writings of the Churches Ceremonials. Our Saviour indeed uſed the Words, but it was to expreſs what his meaning was; had he barely acted

ed the thing, without expreſſing himſelf by ſome ſuch Form of Words, we could never have known what it was he did. But what neceſſity is there now of ſo doing? for when the Congregation is met together, to the breaking of Bread and Prayer, and ſee Bread and Wine upon the Communion Table, is there any man can doubt of the meaning of it, although the Canon be not read? It was the farther ſolemnizing, and beautifying that holy action which brought the Canon in; and not an opinion of adding any thing to the ſubſtance of the action. For that the words were uſed by our Saviour to work any thing upon the Bread and Wine, can never out of Scripture or Reaſon be deduced; and beyond theſe two, I have no

ground for my Religion, neither in Subſtance nor in Ceremony. The main Foundation that upholds the neceſſity of this form of action now in uſe, is Church-Cuſtom and Church-Error.

Now for that Topique place of Church-Cuſtom, it is generally too much abuſed: For whereas naturally the neceſſity of the thing ought to give warrant to the practice of the Church; I know not by what device matters are turned about, and the cuſtomary practice of the Church is alledged to prove the neceſſity of the thing; as if things had received their Original from the Church-Authority, and not as the truth is, from an higher Hand. As for the Churches Error, on which I told you this Form of action is founded, it conſiſts in the

the uncautelous taking up an unſound ungrounded concluſion of the Fathers for a religious Maxim. St. *Ambroſe*, I trow, was he that ſaid it, and poſterity hath too generally applauded it, *Accedat verbum ad elementum, & fiat Sacramentum.* By which they would perſwade us, againſt all experience, that to make up a Sacrament, there muſt be ſomething ſaid and ſomething done; whereas indeed to the perfection of a Sacrament, or holy Myſtery (for both theſe are one) it is ſufficient that one thing be done whereby another is ſignified, though nothing be ſaid at all. When *Tarquinius* was walking in his Garden, a Meſſenger came and asked him, what he would have done unto the Town of *Gabij*, then newly taken? He anſwered nothing,

thing. But with his Wand ſtruck off the tops of the higheſt *Popies*; and the Meſſenger underſtanding his meaning, cut off the Heads of the chief of the City. Had this been done in *Sacris*, it had been forthwith truly a Sacrament, or holy Myſtery. *Cum in omnibus Scientiis voces ſignificent res, hoc habet proprium Theologia, quòd ipſæ res ſignificatæ per voces, etiam ſignificent aliquid*, ſaith *Aquinas*; and upon the ſecond ſignification are all Spiritual and myſtical ſenſes founded: So that *in Sacris*, a Myſtery or Sacrament is then acted, when one thing is done and another is ſignified, as it is in the Holy Communion, though nothing be ſaid at all. The ancient Sacrifices of the *Jews*, whether weekly, monethly, or yearly, their Paſſover, their ſitting in Boothes,

&c.

&c. These were all Sacraments, yet we find not any ſacred forms of words, uſed by the Prieſts or People in the execution of them.

To ſum up that which we have to ſay in this Point, the calling upon the words of conſecration in the Euchariſt, is too weakly founded to be made argumentative, for the action is perfect, whether thoſe words be uſed or forborn: And in truth to ſpeak my opinion, I ſee no great harm could enſue, were they quite omitted. Certainly thus much good would follow, that ſome part (though not a little one) of the ſuperſtition that adheres to that action, by reaſon of an ungrounded conceit of the neceſſity and force of the words in it, would forthwith pill off and fall away: I would not have you underſtand

derſtand me ſo, as if I would preſcribe for, or deſire the diſuſe of the words; only two things I would commend to you, Firſt, That the uſe of the Canon is a thing indifferent. And, Secondly, That in this knack of making Sacraments, Chriſtians have taken a greater liberty than they can well juſtify: Firſt, In forging Sacraments, more than God (for ought doth or can appear) did ever intend: And Secondly, In adding to the Sacraments inſtituted of God many formalities, and ceremonial circumſtances upon no warrant but their own; which circumſtances by long uſe, begat in the minds of men a conceit, that they were eſſential parts of that to which indeed they were but appendant; and that only by the device of

ſome

ſome who practiſed a power in the Church morethan was convenient.

Thus much for the firſt common miſtake.

The Second is worſe than it; You ſee that both parts agreed in the acknowledgment of the real preſence of the Body of Chriſt in the Euchariſt, though they differ in the manner of his Preſence, and application of himſelf to the receiver; though the Proteſtant Diſputant ſeems to have gone a little beyond his Leader: Had he expreſt himſelf in the point of Bread and Wine, what became of it, whether it remain'd in its proper nature yea or no, I could the better have fathom'd him: Now theſe words of his, that the Bread and Wine after conſecration are truly, and really the Body of Chriſt, howſoever

ever they are ſuppled and allayed with that clauſe, *not after a carnal, but after a ſpiritual manner*, yet ſtill remain too crude and raw, and betray the Speaker for a *Lutheran* at leaſt, if not for a favourer of the Church of *Rome*; for as for that Phraſe, *of a ſpiritual manner*, which ſeems to give ſeaſon and moderation to his concluſion, it can yield him but ſmall relief: For firſt, To ſay the fleſh of Chriſt is in the Bread, but *not after a carnal manner*, is but the ſame nonſence, which the Divines of *Rome* put upon us on the like occaſion, when telling us, that the Blood of Chriſt is really ſacrificed, and ſhed in the Sacrament, they add by way of Gloſs, that it is done *incruente*, unbloodily; by the like Analogy they may tell us, if they pleaſe, that

that the body of Chriſt is there incorporated unbodily, Fleſh not carnally may paſs the Preſs jointly the next Edition of the Book of Bulls. Again, in another reſpect, That clauſe, *of a ſpiritual manner* doth your Proteſtant Diſputer but little ſervice, if any at all; for the Catholick Diſputant contriving with himſelf how to ſeat the Body of God in the Euchariſt, as may be moſt for his eaſe, tells us, that he is there as Spirits and glorified Bodies (which St. *Paul* calls *ſpiritual*) are in the places they poſſeſs; ſo then, the one tells you the Body of Chriſt is there really, but ſpiritually; the other, that he is there really, but as a Spirit in a place; and what now, I pray you, is the difference between them? By the way, in the paſſage you may ſee what

what account to make of your Catholick Disputer. *Aristotle*, and with him common sense, tells us thus much, *That he that compares two Bodies together, must know them both*; Doth this Gentleman know any thing concerning the site and locality of Spirits, and Bodies glorified? if he doth, let him do us the courtesy as to shew us, at what price he purchased that degree of knowledg, that so we may try our Credit, and see if we can buy it at the same rate; *Tertius è Cœlo cecidit Cato?* Is he like a second *Paul*, lately descended out of the third Heavens, and there hath made us the discovery? for by what other means he could attain to that knowledg, my dulness cannot suggest. But if he doth not know (as indeed he neither doth

doth nor can, for there is no means left to make diſcovery that way) then with what congruity can he tell us that the Body of Chriſt is in the Bread, as Spirits, and glorified Bodies are in their places, if he know not what manner of location and ſite, Spirits and glorified Bodies have? I ſhall not need to prompt your diſcretion thus far, as that you ought not to make dainties of ſuch fruitleſs and deſperate Diſputers; who, as the Apoſtle notes, thruſt themſelves into things they have not ſeen, and upon a falſe ſhew of knowledge, abuſe eaſie Hearers, and of things they know not, adventure to ſpeak they know not what.

To return then, and conſider a little more of this ſecond miſtake common to both your Diſputants,

I will deal as favourably as I can with your Proteſtant Diſputer; for though I think he miſtakes himſelf (for I know no Proteſtant that teacheth, that the common Bread, after the word ſpoken is really made the Body of Chriſt) yet he might well take occaſion thus to erre out of ſome Proteſtant Writings: For generally the Reformed Divines do falſly report that Holy Action, whether you regard the Eſſence or Uſe thereof.

For firſt, if in regard of the Eſſence, ſome Proteſtants, and that of chief note, ſtick not to ſay, That the words of Conſecration are not a meer *Trope*, and from hence it muſt needs follow, that in ſome ſence they muſt needs be taken literally, which is enough to plead authority for the Gentlemans Error.

ror. But that which they preach concerning a real preſence and participation of Chriſts Body in the Sacrament; they expound not by a ſuppoſal that the Bread becomes Gods Body, but that together with the Sacramental Elements, there is conveighed into the Soul of the worthy Receiver, the very Body and Blood of God, but after a ſecret, ineffable, and wonderfull manner. From hence, as I take it, have proceeded theſe crude ſpeeches of the Learned of the Reformed parts, ſome dead, ſome living, wherein they take upon them to aſſure the Divines of *Rome*, that we acknowledge a Real Preſence as well as they; but for the manner how, *con*, or *trans*, or *ſub*, or *in*, ἐπέχομεν, we play the *Scepticks*, and determine not. This conceit, be-

ſides the falſhood of it, is a meer novelty, neither is it to be found in the Books of any of the Antients, till *Martin Bucer* roſe. He out of an unſeaſonable baſhfulneſs, and fear to ſeem to recede too far from the Church of *Rome*, taught to the purpoſe now related, concerning the Doctrine of Chriſt's Preſence in the Sacrament; and from him it deſcended into the Writings of *Calvin* and *Beza*, whoſe Authority have well-near ſpread it over the face of the Reformed Churches. This is an Error which, as I ſaid, touches the Eſſence of that holy Action; but there are many now which touch the end and uſe of it, which are practiſed by the Reformed parts; for out of an extravagant fancy they have of it, they abuſe it to many ends,

of

of which we may think the firſt Inſtituter (ſave that he was God, and knew all things) never thought of: For we make it an Arbitrator of Civil buſineſſes; and imploy it in ending Controverſies; and for Confirmation of what we ſay or do, we commonly promiſe to take the Sacrament upon it; we teach, that it confirms our Faith in Chriſt, whereas indeed the receiving of it is a ſign of Faith confirmed, and men come to it to teſtifie that they do believe, not to procure that they may believe: For if a Man doubt of the truth of Chriſtianity, think you that his ſcruples would be removed upon the receiving of the Sacrament? I would it were ſo; we ſhould not have ſo many doubting Chriſtians, who yet receive

the Sacrament oft enough: We teach it to be *Viaticum morientium*, whereby we abuſe many diſtreſſed Conſciences, and ſick Bodies, who ſeek for comfort there, and finding it not, conclude from thence (I ſpeak what I know) ſome defect in their Faith. The participation of this Sacrament to ſick and weak perſons, what unſeemly events hath it occaſioned, the vomiting up of the Elements anon, upon the receipt of them, the reſurging the Wine into the Cup, before the Miniſter could remove his hand to the interruption of the action? Now all theſe Miſtakes and Errors have riſen upon ſome ungrounded and fond practices, crept long ſince (God knows how) into the Church, and as yet not ſufficiently purged out. I will

be

be bold to inform you what it is, which is πρῶτον ψεῦδος, the main fundamental fallacy, whence all theſe abuſes have ſprung. There hath been a fancy of long ſubſiſtance in the Churches, that in the Communion there is ſomething given beſides Bread and Wine, of which *the Numerality* given, men have not yet agreed; Some ſay it is the Body of God into which the Bread is tranſubſtantiated; Some ſay it is the ſame Body with which the Bread is conſubſtantiated; Some, that the Bread remaining what it was, there paſſes with it to the Soul the real Body of God, in a ſecret unknown manner; Some, that a further degree of Faith is ſupplied us; Others, that ſome degree of Gods grace, whatever it be, is exhibited which

otherwiſe would be wanting: All which variety of conceits muſt needs fall out, as having no other ground, but conjecture weakly founded. To ſettle you therefore in your Judgment, both of the thing it ſelf, and of the true uſe of it, I will commend to your conſideration theſe few Propoſitions.

Firſt, In the Communion, there is nothing given but Bread, and Wine.

Secondly, The Bread and Wine are ſigns indeed, but not of any thing there exhibited, but of ſomewhat given long ſince, even of Chriſt given for us upon the Croſs ſixteen hundred years ago, and more.

Thirdly, Jeſus Chriſt is eaten at the Communion Table in no ſence neither

neither Spiritually, by virtue of any thing done there, nor really, neither Metaphorically, nor Literally. Indeed that which is eaten (I mean the Bread) is called Chriſt by a Metaphor; but it is eaten truly and properly.

Fourthly, The Spiritual eating of Chriſt is common to all places, as well as the Lord's Table.

Laſt of all, The Uſes and Ends of the Lord's Supper can be no more than ſuch as are mentioned in the Scriptures, and they are but two.

Firſt, The commemoration of the Death and Paſſion of the Son of God, ſpecified by himſelf at the Inſtitution of the Ceremony.

Secondly, To teſtify our Union with Chriſt, and Communion one with another; which end St. *Paul* hath taught us. In

In these few Conclusions the whole Doctrine and Use of the Lord's Supper is fully set down; and whoso leadeth you beyond this, doth but abuse you. *Quicquid ultra quæritur, non intelligitur.* The proof of these Propositions would require more than the Limits of a Letter will admit of; and I see my self already to have exceeded these Bounds. I will therefore pass away to consider the second part of your Letter.

In this second Part, I would you had pleased to have done as in the first you did, That is, not only set down the Proposition of the Catholick, but some Answer of the Protestant, by which we might have discovered his Judgement; I might perchance have used the same

ſame Liberty as I have done before, namely diſcovered the miſſtakes of both parties; for I ſuſpect that as there they did, ſo here they would have given me cauſe enough. Now I content my ſelf barely to ſpeak to the Queſtion. The Queſtion is, *Whether the Church may Err in Fundamentals?* By the *Church* I will not trifle as your Catholick doth, and mean only the Proteſtant Party, as he profeſſeth he doth only the *Roman Faction.* But I ſhall underſtand all Factions in Chriſtianity, All that entitle themſelves to Chriſt, whereſoever diſperſed all the World over.

Firſt, I Anſwer, That every Chriſtian may err that will: for if men might not err willfully, then there could be no Hereſie; Hereſie being nothing elſe but wilful Error:

Error : For if we account miſtakes befalling us through humane Frailties to be Hereſies, then it will follow, That every man ſince the Apoſtles time was an Heretick; for never yet was there any Chriſtian, the Apoſtles only excepted, which did not in ſomething concerning the Chriſtian Faith miſtake himſelf, either by addition or omiſſion, or miſinterpretation of ſomething. An evident ſign of this Truth you may ſee in this by the Providence of God: the Writings of many learned Chriſtians from the Spring of Chriſtianity, have been left unto poſterity, and amongſt all thoſe, ſcarcely any is to be found who is not confeſt on all hands to have miſtaken ſome things, and thoſe miſtakes for the moſt part ſtand upon Record by ſome who pur-

purpoſely obſerved them. Neither let this (I beſeech you) beget in you a conceit as if I meant to diſgrace thoſe whoſe Labours have been and are of infinite benefit in the Church. For if *Ariſtotle*, and *Aphrodiſeus*, and *Galen*, and the reſt of thoſe Excellent men whom God had indued with extraordinary portions of natural Knowledge, have with all thankful and ingenious men throughout all Generations retained their Credit entire, notwithſtanding it is acknowledged that they have all of them in many things, ſwerved from the Truth; Then, why ſhould not Chriſtians expreſs the ſame ingenuity to thoſe who have laboured before us in the Expoſition of the Chriſtian Faith, and highly eſteem them for their Works ſake, their many

many infirmities notwithſtanding? You will ſay, that for private perſons it is confeſt they may and daily do err; But can Chriſtians err by whole Shoals, by Armies meeting for defence of the Truth in Synods and Councils, eſpecially General, which are countenanced by the great Fable of all the World, the Biſhop of *Rome*?

I anſwer, To ſay that Councils may not err, though private perſons may, at firſt ſight is a merry ſpeech; as if a man ſhould ſay, That every ſingle Souldier indeed may run away, but a whole Army cannot, eſpecially having *Hannibal* for their Captain; and ſince it is confeſt, that all ſingle perſons not only may, but do err, it will prove a very hard matter, to gather out of theſe a multitude, of whom being

ing gathered together, we may be ſecured they cannot err. I muſt for mine own part confeſs, that Councils, and Synods not only may and have erred, but conſidering the means how they are managed, it were a great marvel if they did not err: For what men are they of whom thoſe great Meetings do conſiſt? are they the beſt, the moſt learned, the moſt vertuous, the moſt likely to walk uprightly? No, the greateſt, the moſt ambitious, and many times men, neither of Judgment, nor Learning; ſuch are they of whom theſe Bodies do conſiſt: and are theſe men in common equity likely to determine for Truth? *Qui ut in vita, ſic in cauſis, ſpes quoque improbas alunt*, as *Quintilian* ſpeaks. Again, when ſuch perſons are thus

thus met, their way to proceed to concluſion, is not by weight of Reaſon, but by multitude of Votes and Suffrages; as if it were a maxim in nature, that the greater part muſt needs be the better; whereas our common experience ſhews, That, *Nunquam ita bene agitur cum rebus humanis ut plures ſint meliores.* It was never heard in any profeſſion, that Concluſion of Truth went by plurality of Voices, the Chriſtian profeſſion only excepted; and I have often muſed how it comes to paſs, that the way which in all other Sciences is not able to warrant the pooreſt Concluſion, ſhould be thought ſufficient to give authority to Concluſions in Divinity, the Supream Empreſs of Sciences. But I ſee what it is that is uſually pleaded, and with your leave

leave I will a little consider of it.

It is given out, that Christian meetings have such an assistance of God, and his blessed Spirit, that let their persons be what they will, they may assure themselves against all possibility of mistaking; and this is that they say, which to this way of ending Controversies, which in all other Sciences is so contemptible, gives a determining to Theological Disputes of so great Authority. And this musick of the Spirit is so pleasing, that it hath taken the Reformed Party too; For with them likewise all things at length end in the Spirit; but with this difference, that those of *Rome* confine the Spirit to the Bishops and Counsels of *Rome*, but the Protestant enlargeth this working of the Spirit,

and makes it the Director of private meditations. I ſhould doubtleſs do great injury to the goodneſs of God, if I ſhould deny the ſufficient aſſiſtance of God to the whole world, to preſerve them both from ſin in their Actions, and damnable errors in their opinions; much more ſhould I do it, if I denied it to the Church of God; but this aſſiſtance of God may very well be, and yet men may fall into ſin and errors. St. *Paul* preaching to the *Gentiles*, tells them that God was with them in ſo palpable a manner, that even by groping they might have found him, yet both he and we know what the *Gentiles* did. Chriſt hath promiſed his perpetual aſſiſtance to his Church; but hath he left any Propheſie, that the Church ſhould

per-

perpetually adhere to him? if any man think he hath, it is his part to inform us, where this Prophesy is to be found. That matters may go well with men, two things must concur, the assistance of God to men, and the adherence of men to God; if either of these be deficient, there will be little good done. Now the first of these is never deficient, but the second is very often; so that the Promise of Christs perpetual presence made unto the Church, infers not at all any presumption of Infallibility. As for that term of Spirit which is so much taken up, to open the danger that lurks under it, we must a little distinguish upon the Word. This term [*Spirit of God,*] either signifies the third Person in the blessed Trinity,

or elſe the wonderful power of Miracles, of Tongues, of Healing, &c, which was given to the Apoſtles, and other of the Primitive Chriſtians, at the firſt preaching of the Goſpel, but both theſe meanings are ſtrangers to our purpoſe; The Spirit of God, as it concerns the Queſtion here in hand, ſignifies either ſomething within us, or ſomething without us; Without us, it ſignifies the written Word, recorded in the Books of the Prophets, Apoſtles, and Evangeliſts, which are metonymically called the Spirit, becauſe the Holy Ghoſt ſpake thoſe things by their mouths when they lived, and now ſpeaks unto us by their pens when they are dead. If you pleaſe to receive it, this alone is left as Chriſts Vicar in his abſence,

ſence, to give us directions both in our actions and opinions; he that tells you of another Spirit in the Church to direct you in your way, may as well tell you a tale of a Puck, or a walking Spirit in the Church-Yard. But that this Spirit ſpeaking without us may be beneficial to us, *oportet aliquid intus eſſe*, there muſt be ſomething within us, which alſo we call the Spirit; and this is twofold; For either it ſignifies a ſecret Illapſe, or ſupernatural Influence of God upon the hearts of men, by which he is ſuppoſed inwardly, to incline, inform, and direct men in their ways, and wills, and to preſerve them from ſin and miſtake; or elſe it ſignifies that in us, which is oppoſed againſt the fleſh, & which denominates us ſpiritual men, and

by which we are ſaid *to walk according to the Spirit*; that which St. *Paul* means, when he tells us, *The Fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the Fleſh,* (Rom. 7.) *ſo that we may not do what we liſt.* Now of theſe two, the former it is, which the Church ſeems to appeal unto in de ermining Controverſies by way of Counſel: But to this I have little to ſay. *Firſt*, Becauſe I know not whether there be any ſuch thing yea, or no. *Secondly* Becauſe experience ſhews, that the pretence of the Spirit in this ſence is very dangerous, as being next at hand to give countenance to impoſture and abuſe: which is a thing ſufficiently ſeen, and acknowledged both by the Papiſt and Proteſtant Party; as it appears by this, that though both pretend unto it, yet both

both upbraid each other with the pretence of it. But the Spirit in the ſecond ſence, is that I contend for; and this is nothing but the Reaſon illuminated by Revelation out of the written Word. For when the Mind and Spirit humbly conform and ſubmit to the written Will of God, then you are properly ſaid to have the Spirit of God, and to walk according to the Spirit, not according to the Fleſh. This alone is that Spirit which preſerves us frō ſtraying from the Truth; For he indeed that hath the Spirit, errs not at all, or if he do, it is with as little hazard and danger as may be; which is the higheſt point of Infallibility, which either private Perſons or Churches can arrive unto. Yet would I not have you to conceive that I deny that at this day the Holy Ghoſt

communicateshimſelfto anyin this ſecret and ſupernatural manner, as in foregoing times He had been wont to do; indeed my own many uncleanneſſes are ſufficient reaſons to hinder that good Spirit to participate himſelf unto me, after that manner. The Holy Ghoſt was pleaſed to come down like a Dove; *Veniunt ad candida tecta Columbæ. Accipiet nullas ſordida Turris Aves.* Now it is no reaſon to conclude the Holy Ghoſt imparts him ſelfin this manner to none, becauſe he hath not done that favour unto me. But thus much I will ſay, that the benefit of that ſacred Influence is confined to thoſe happy Souls in whom it is, and cannot extend it ſelf to the Church in publick; And if any Catholick except againſt you for ſaying ſo,

warrant

warrant your ſelf and me out of *Aquinas*, whoſe words are theſe, *Innititur fidei natura revelationi Apoſtolis & Prophetis factæ, qui Canonicos Libros ſcripſerunt, non autem Revelationi, ſiqua fuit, aliis Doctoribus factæ.* It being granted then, that Churches can err, it remains then in the ſecond place, to conſider how far they may err; I anſwer for Churches as I did before for private Perſons, Churches may err in Fundamentals if they liſt, for they may be heretical, for Churches may be wicked, they may be Idolaters, and why then not heretical? Is Hereſy a more dangerous thing than Idolatry? For whereas it is pleaded, that Churches cannot fall into Hereſie, becauſe of that promiſe of our Saviour, *That the Gates of Hell ſhall*

not

not prevail againſt the Church, is but out of miſtake of the meaning of that place; and indeed I have often muſed how ſo plain a place could ſo long and ſo generally be miſconſtrued: To ſecure you therefore, that you be not abuſed with theſe words hereafter, (for they are often quoted to prove the Churches Infallibility) I ſhall indeavour to give you the natural meaning of them, For πύλαι Ἅδου, the *Gates of Hell*, is an Hebraiſme; for in the Hebrew Expreſſion, the Gates of a thing ſignifies the thing it ſelf, as the gates of *Sion*, *Sion* it ſelf, and by the ſame proportion the gates of Hell ſignifies Hell it ſelf: Now Ἅδης which we Engliſh Hell, as in no place of Scripture it ſignifies Hereſie, ſo very frequently in Scripture it ſigni-

ſignifies Death, or rather the ſtate of the dead, and indifferently applied to good and bad; Let us then take the Word in that meaning, for what greater means can we have to warrant the ſignification of a Scripture word, than the general meaning of it in Scripture? So that when our Saviour ſpake theſe words, he made no promiſe to the Church of perſevering in the Truth, but to thoſe that did perſevere in the Truth he made a promiſe of victory againſt death and hell; And what he there ſays, ſounds to no other purpoſe, but this, that thoſe who ſhall continue his, although they dy, yet death ſhall not have the Dominion over them; but the time ſhall come, that the bands of Death ſhall be broken; and as Chriſt is riſen, ſo

ſhall

ſhall they that are his riſe again to Immortality: For any help therefore that this Text affords, Churches may err in Fundamentals. But to ſpeak the Truth, I much wonder, not only how any Churches, but how any private man, that is careful to know and follow the Truth, can err in Fundamentals: For ſince it is moſt certain, that the Scripture contains at leaſt the Fundamental Parts of Chriſtian Faith, how is it poſſible, that any Man, that is careful to ſtudy and believe the Scripture, ſhould be ignorant of any neceſſary part of his Faith? Now whether the Church of *Rome* err in Fundamentals, yea or no? To anſwer this, I muſt crave leave to uſe this Diſtinction; To err in Fundamentals, is either to be ignorant

Errors in Fundamentals.

of

of, or deny ſomething to be fundamental that is, or to entertain ſomething for Fundamental, which is not. In the firſt ſenſe, the Church of *Rome*, entertaining the Scriptures as ſhe doth, cannot poſſibly be ignorant of any principal part of Chriſtian Faith; all her error is, in entertaining in her ſelf, and obtruding upon others, a multitude of things for Fundamentals, which no way concern our Faith at all: Now how dangerous it is thus to do, except I know whether ſhe did this willingly or wittingly, yea or no, is not eaſy to define: If willingly ſhe doth it; it is certainly high and damnable preſumption, if ignorantly, I know not what mercies God hath in ſtore for them that ſin not out of malitious wickedneſs,

neſs. Now concerning the merriment newly ſtarted; I mean the requiring of a Catalogue of Fundamentals, I need to anſwer no more, but what *Abraham* tells the rich man in Hell, *Habent Moſen & Prophetas*, They have *Moſes*, and the Prophets, the Apoſtles, and the Evangeliſts, let them ſeek them there; for if they find them not there, in vain ſhall they ſeek them in all the World beſides. But yet to come a little nearer to the Particulars; If the Church of *Rome* would needs know what is Fundamental, in our conceit, and what not, the Anſwer, as far as my ſelf in Perſon am concerned in the Buſineſs, ſhall be no other than this; Let her obſerve what Points they are, wherein

wherein we agree with her, and let her think, if ſhe pleaſe, that we account of them as Fundamentals, eſpecially if they be in the Scriptures; and on the other hand, let her mark in what Points we refuſe Communion with her, and let her aſſure her ſelf, we eſteem thoſe as no Fundamentals. If ſhe deſire a Liſt and Catalogue made of all thoſe, ſhe is at leiſure enough, for ought I know, to do it her ſelf.

Laſt of all, Concerning the imputation of Rebellion and Schiſm againſt Church-Authority, with which your Catholick Diſputant meant to affright you; all that is but meerly Powder without Shot, and can never hurt you; For ſince it hath been ſufficiently evidenced unto us, that the Church of *Rome* hath adulterated the Truth of God,

by

by mixing with it ſundry Inventi-ons of her own; it was the Con-ſcience of our duty to God, that made us to ſeparate: For where the Truth of God doth once ſuffer, there Union is Conſpiracy, Au-thority is but Tyranny, & Church-es are but Routs; And ſuppoſe we, that we miſtook, and made our Se-paration upon Error, the Church of *Rome* being right in all her Waies, though we think other-wiſe, yet could not this much pre-judice us; For, it is Schiſm upon wilfulneſs that brings danger with it, Schiſm upon miſtake, and Schiſm upon juſt occaſion, hath in it ſelf little hurt, if any at all.

SIR,

SIR,

I Return you more than I thought, or you expected; yet leſs than the Argument requir'd: If you ſhall favour me ſo much as to carefully read what I have carefully written, you ſhall find (at leaſt in thoſe Points you occaſioned me to touch upon) ſufficient ground to plant your ſelf ſtrongly againſt all Diſcourſe of the Romiſh Corner-creepers, *which they uſe for the Seducing of unſtable Souls. Be it much or little that I have done, I require no other reward than the continuance of your good Affection to,*

Your SERVANT,

whom you know.

A PARAPHRASE ON S. Matthew's Gospel.

By the ever Memorable

Mr. *JOHN HALES*,

of *Eaton-Colledge*, &c.

Printed, 1677.

A

A PARAPHRASE on St. Matthews Gospel.

CHAP. XII.

Scholar.

SIR,

Thank you for the pains you have taken in facilitating to my Understanding the scope and purpose of the XI. of St. *Matthew*: If I might not be too troublesome to you, I would also desire you to take the like pains with me in the Twelfth.

Maſter. I ſhall, with all my heart; provided that you will make your Objections, as they riſe within you; for peradventure, I may think you underſtand that which you do not, and not underſtand that which you do, and ſo loſe my Labour.

Scholar. I ſhall obey you readily, and therefore to begin with the beginning of the Chapter; I pray, Sir, how is it ſaid, 1. that, *At that time, Jeſus went through the Corn, with his Diſciples?* when in the very next Chapter before, it is ſaid, *That he ſent all his Diſciples away from him.*

Maſter. By theſe Words, *at that time*, is not meant the very next immediate Inſtant of time, to that, when he ſpake the laſt words going before; but ſuch a convenient

nient portion of time, wherein the twelve Diſciples might have gone about thoſe parts, whereunto they were ſent, and returned back again: So St. *Matthew*, having ſpoken newly of Chriſts dwelling in *Nazareth*, when he was a Child of about two years old, immediately ſubjoyns, *In thoſe days came John the Baptiſt*, as if *John* had come within ſome few days after his coming into *Nazareth*, when we know there paſſed eight and twenty years between. Math. 3. 1.

Scholar. I believe it as you ſay, and therefore ſhall paſs to that which doth more trouble me, and that is, What that was, which the Diſciples did, *which was not lawful on the Sabbath day.*

Maſter. How come you to be troubled at that? Is it not ſaid in

plain Terms, *they plucked the Ears of Corn, & did eat them.* Why ſhould not you think that this was their fault?

Scholar. I ſhall tell you why: To my thinking, there are three things ſaid, 1. *That they went through the Corn.* 2. *That they plucked the Ears.* 3. *That they eat them.* Now whether all theſe or one of theſe was their Fault, I cannot tell; and I ſhall tell you the Reaſon of my doubt.

Firſt, It is true that their very Walking might have been their fault, becauſe it was not lawful on the Sabbath, to walk above the ſpace of two thouſand Cubits, and we know not how far Chriſt & the Diſciples might have come that day; But yet methinks, if that had been it, they ſhould have reproved Chriſt as well as his Diſciples, becauſe 'tis very likely they walk't the one

one as much & as far as the other.

Secondly, It is true, that their plucking the Ears of Corn might have been their fault, but yet methinks it should not, in regard the Law is so clear, in the 23. *Deut.* 25. *When thou comest into the standing Corn of thy Neighbour, then thou mayst pluck the Ears with thine hand, but thou shalt not move a Sickle unto thy Neighbours standing Corn.* And, truly why that, which is so plainly lawful at another time, should be unlawful on the Sabbath (being it is so far from being any kind of labour or servile work) I cannot imagine.

3. It's true, that they did eat them, and I cannot see what fault there is in that, unless you can shew me.

Mast. And peradventure I shall shew you more in that than you thought on. It is true that the general

neral conſent of Expoſitors runs on their plucking the Ears upon the Sabbath-Day, as being the thing condemned by the *Phariſees* for an unlawful thing: But I think they would be much troubled to prove it. The cuſtom and manner of the *Jews*, (eſpecially ſince the times of the *Macchabees*) being to allow Acts of greater labour and pain than the plucking of an Ear, namely, waging War againſt their Enemies, the Travelling of Carryers and Merchants, with ſuch others, even on the Sabbath-Day. I ſhould rather encline to think, that their Fault was Eating; eſpecially if that be true, which the very Heathen Poets tax and ſcoff them ſo with, namely, their *Sabbath-Faſts*. For if all things be well conſidered, I believe there will more be

be ſaid for this, than for the other Crime. And if a man will go no further than that Anſwer which our Saviour makes for them, he he ſhall find ground enough to be of this opinion. For, if the pretended fault had been working or labouring, our Saviour Chriſt might have eaſily laid his Anſwer upon *Joſhua*, or upon many others, who did greater work than this upon the Sabbath. But laying it as he doth upon *David*, and upon his Eating that which was forbidden: He ſeemes to Anſwer one unlawful Eating with another, when Neceſſity was a ſufficient diſpenſation for both. I do not oblige you to believe this as a poſitive Truth, but only tell you that as much may be ſaid for the one as the other; but if you wouldbe ſure to know what

their

their fault was, you had best put them both together and you will not miss.

Scholar. I thank you for this Light, I wish you could give me as good in my next Objection.

Master. I shall do my best, what is that I pray?

Scholar. Our Saviour saith, in the third *Verse* of this *Chap.* that *David did eat of the Shew-Bread, and they that were with him*; and the Holy Ghost saith, 1 *Sam.* 21. 1. where this History is recorded, That there was no man with him, for it is said there, that *Ahimelech the Priest was afraid at the meeting of David, and said unto him, Why art Thou alone, and why is no man with Thee?* How shall I reconcile this Contradiction to my Thinking?

Master.

Master. The truth is, The Words of our Saviour in St. *Matthew*, are too plain and evident, than to admit of any other Construction, but that there were some other men with *David*; and if they could admit of it, yet St. *Mark* would put all out of doubt, for he saith expresly, that, *David did eat the Shew-Bread, and gave it to them that were with him*, *Mark.* 2. 26. And therefore, when the Priest saith, that there was no man with him in *Samuel*, it is best to understand that, of no man in sight, because, peradventure, *David* might have caused them to withdraw for the present, till he had got relief from the Priest, both for himself and them. And this, I conceive the best Satisfaction unto that doubt.

Scholar.

Scholar. I think it not improbable; but before I leave this ſtory of *David*, I pray, tell me how it comes to paſs, that our Saviour ſaith, *David entred into the Houſe of God*, in v. 4. of this Chap. when as yet the Houſe of God was not built, (*i. e.*) when as yet there was no Temple.

Maſter. It was well Objected, and the Anſwer to be given is this: That our Saviour calls that place where the Tabernacle then was, *The Houſe of God*, which afterwards became the proper appellation of the Temple.

Scholar. It is very likely: Now if you pleaſe, let us paſs from this Anſwer concerning *David*, to that concerning the Prieſts, in the 5*th.V.* where Chriſt ſaith, *That the Prieſts on the Sabbath-Day, prophane the Sabbath, and are blameleſs*: What doth he mean by that? *Maſter.*

Maſter. In thoſe words, our Saviour uſeth another Argument, in behalf of his Diſciples; which they call an Argument from the leſs to the greater, to juſtify their Plucking and their Eating on the Sabbath-Day. Amongſt the *Jews*, the Law of the Sabbath was ever ſo to be interpreted, as that it hindred not the Works of the Temple; and therefore it was a kind of Rule in the *Jewiſh* Law, that in the Temple there was no Sabbath. From this ſubmiſſion of the Law of the Sabbath to the works of the Temple; Our Saviour argueth to that, which is greater than it, The works of a Prophet, who was above a Prieſt: His Anſwer is in brief this; The Prieſts, by their works in the Temple upon the Sabbath, were not thought

to

to prophane the Sabbath; and therefore, there is less reason that my Disciples, who are Prophets, should be thought to prophane it, in doing of that which is a less work than theirs; And that this is the Scope of his Reply, will appear by that which follows, when he saith, *That in this place, there is One greater than the Temple*, in the 6th *Verse*; For, the truth is, every Prophet was greater than the Temple, that is, he was obliged in no case to the Laws & Customs of the Temple, but might sacrifice out of it, when he pleased, as appears in the practice of *Eliah*. And whereas it may be Objected, That the Priestly Function, on the Sabbath, could not be performed without the Labour of Offering, but the Prophetical Function of the

the Diſciples might be performed on the Sabbath, without plucking ears and eating: The anſwer is, that both our Saviour and his Diſciples were ſo intent upon their Prophetical Employment, that, as elſewhere, *they forgat to take Bread*, So here, they either forgat, or had no time for the proviſion of victuals before the Sabbath, whereon to feed on the Sabbath.

Scholar. I apprehend your meaning, and deſire you to make the force of Chriſts third Argument as evident unto me, which follows in the ſeventh *Verſe*, where he ſaith, *But if ye had known what this meaneth; I will have mercy and not ſacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltleſs.*

Maſter. His meaning is no more but this, That when two Laws

ſeem to claſh ſo againſt one another, that both cannot be kept; the better is to be obſerved, and the worſe omitted; The Law which willeth us to *do good to all men*, and to further them in the means of their Salvation, which to a Chriſtian is a Law Moral, never to be omitted; is better than the Law which willeth us not to *work* or *eat* upon the *Sabbath*, which is onely a Law Ritual: Chriſt could not intend to teach, and the Diſciples intend to prepare and fit the minds of the people to be taught, and withall intend the preparing of ſuch things, as were requiſite to the ſtrict obſervation of the Sabbath; And therefore in Equity, the Law of the Sabbath ought to give place to the Law of Inſtructing the World in the

the ways of Happineſs, and not to have juſtled with it.

Schol. I conceive this Argument, but yet methinks, there follows ſomewhat like a Reaſon, which I do not yet conceive, in the next verſe; *For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath*; Pray ſhew me what the meaning is of that.

Maſter. They that by the [*Son of Man*] here, underſtand Chriſt, or the Meſſias, do miſtake; for in that acceptation of the Words, the Reaſon doth not hold: for if Chriſt had meant onely, that he as the Meſſias, was Lord of the Sabbath, and ſo could abrogate it at his pleaſure, then what needed all the three other Arguments, that went before? By the [*Son of Man*] therefore is to be underſtood every common ordinary

man, as appears moſt evidently by that of St. *Mark* 2. 27. *The Sabbath was made for Man, and not Man for the Sabbath.* Beſides, at this time, Chriſt neither had preached, nor would have others to preach, that He was the *Meſſiah*; and a good while after this, as you may ſee in *Matth.* 16. 20. He charged, *that they ſhould tell it no man*, &c. The ſenſe therefore of the words, is this: That which is ordained for another thing, ought to give place to that thing, for which it is ordained: But the Sabbath was ordain'd for Man, every Man; therefore it ought to give place unto Him; namely, when a thing ſo nearly concerning Man, as his Salvation, ſteppeth in between. For, to be [*Lord of the Sabbath*] is, to diſpoſe and order the Sabbath unto his

his own use, and to have a Right so to order, and dispose it.

Scholar. I thank you for this, and for the pains: and because I have put you to so much already, I shall trouble you with nothing concerning the next Story of the man which had the withered hand, because I think I do well enough understand it; only, let me desire you to give me your opinion, why, when our Saviour Christ had healed him, and divers other men, of their diseases: It is added in the 16*th* verse of this Chapter, *And he charged them, that they should not make him known?*

Master. Truly, that which was the cause of his secess, or his withdrawing himself from them, in the Verse before may very well be conceived the cause also of this injoyn'd silence; namely, that He

might be ſafer from all violence, and force. But, they which ſay, that He did it out of charity to thoſe Phariſees who did ſeek his life, ſay not amiſs: as *Origen* reports of *Ariſtotle*, that he withdrew himſelf from *Athens*, not for his own ſake; but for the *Athenians* ſake, leſt he ſhould give them an occaſion of committing another murther, after the murther of *Socrates*. Hitherto, as yet, this Zeal and endeavours of the Phariſees to maintain the Traditions of their Elders, and the Religion of their Fathers, might ſeem ſomewhat excuſable; and therefore, Chriſt adding Miracle to Miracle, did wait for their repentance and amendment: in the mean time, preventing them by eſcapes, and concealing of himſelf, from doing him any violence or miſchief,

miſchief, till ſuch time, as that, reſiſting the Light and Teſtimony of their own Conſcience (as ſome of them did, very ſhortly after, as we ſhall ſee anon) they had more deſervedly drawn upon themſelves, the guilt of that innocent blood, which afterwards fell upon their heads: So, that when Chriſt, charged them that they ſhould not make Him known; He meant, only that they ſhould not diſcover where He was, that ſo with the more ſilence, and leſs oppoſition, He might do the buſineſs of his Father: and this ſenſe is agreeable to that which follows out of the Prophet *Iſaiah*, in the 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21 *Verſes*.

Schol. I take it to be ſo indeed: but in theſe words out of *Iſaiah*, there is ſomewhat which does

much trouble me how to underſtand; and that is, the latter part of the 20. *verſe*; where it is ſaid, *Till he ſend forth Judgment unto Victory*: Pray, what do you take to be the meaning of thoſe words?

Maſt. I ſhall run through the whole words of the Prophet, and by that you will better underſtand that part. Theſe words of the Prophet *Iſaiah* are produced by St. *Matth.* for a confirmation of that Meekneſs, Humility, Quietneſs and Silence, with which the great buſineſs of our Salvation was to be diſpatched: For, by theſe words [*I will put my Spirit on Him*] is underſtood the Spirit of Meekneſs, Gentleneſs and Humility, which was emblem'd in the Dove, when it came upon him; and by thoſe words [*and he ſhall ſhew Judgment unto*

unto the Gentiles] is underſtood the preaching of the Chriſtian Law; and therefore, if you mark it in the 42 of *Iſaiah*, and the 4*th verſe*, it is added, as an explication of the word [*Judgment*] going before; *And the Iſles ſhall wait for his Law.* When He comes to preach this Law, or, to ſhew forth this Judgment, ſaith the Prophet, *He ſhall not ſtrive, nor cry*; that is, He ſhall diſcover no ſign of anger, or diſcompoſure in his mind; *neither ſhall any man hear his voice in the ſtreets*, ſaith the Prophet; that is, He ſhall cauſe no Tumult or popular Hubbub; He ſhall not expoſe the vices of Men to the knowledge and cenſure of the World, of whom He hath but the leaſt Hope that they will amend. *A bruiſed Reed ſhall he not break*, ſaith the Prophet; that

that is, the mind which is afflicted, He ſhall not afflict more: *and the ſmoaking flax ſhal he not quench*; that is, where he does but ſee a little *ſmoak*, He will look for ſome *fire*; He will ſo comply with the weakneſſes and infirmities of all Mankind, that he will not be out of hope to cheriſh them up into Virtues. And all this he will do, ſaith the Prophet, *Till he ſend out Judgment unto Victory*; of which words, whatſoever the ſenſe or meaning be, this is plain, that they contain the ſucceſs or event of that Meekneſs, Gentleneſs, and Quietneſs, which went before. Now, taking it for granted, that there is nothing left out in theſe words, as St. *Jerom* does ſuſpect, I can imagine but two ſenſes that can be put upon them: and thoſe two ſenſes ariſe out of the two ſe-

veral

veral acceptations of the word [*Judgment.*] For, *Firſt*, If by [*Judgment*] in this place, be meant the ſame, which was meant by [*Judgment*] in the 18*th verſe*, going before; then the ſenſe of the words is this; He ſhall preach the Chriſtian Law, with all Meekneſs and Mildneſs, maugre all oppoſition and malice of thoſe that do oppugn it, till that Law have prevailed, or gotten the victory; that is, till the greateſt part of all the World embrace it: and this ſenſe is no improper ſenſe, if we look no further. But then, *Secondly*, If by [*Judgment*] be meant, the diſceptation, or diſcuſſion of a Cauſe (in which ſenſe it is often taken in the Scriptures) then the meaning of the words is this; He ſhall uſe ſo much Meekneſs and Gentleneſs,

Gentleneſs, in working upon the minds of all Men in the World, that, let any Man ſit in Judgment upon that which he hath done, and he ſhall carry the Cauſe, or bear away the Victory. To this purpoſe ſaith the Pſalmiſt of God, that, *He is clear when he is judged*, Pſal. 51. 6. And in this ſence God ſaith of himſelf, *O ye men of Judah, judg ye, I pray you, between my Vineyard and Me*, Iſa. 5. 3. And in this Judgment Chriſt got the Victory, when with all Patience and Long-ſufferance, with all Gentleneſs and Meekneſs, He endured the perverſe and crooked diſpoſitions of the People of the *Jews*, and ſpared no Time or Labour to reform them, if they would have hearkned unto him.

Sch.

Sch. Sir, I confeſs there is much reaſon in what you ſay, but methinks it ſeems a little ſtrained ſenſe, to be put upon thoſe words, as you read them, *Till he ſhall ſend forth Judgment*; for according to your ſence, we ſhould read them thus, at leaſt, *Till he ſhall carry away the Judgment with Victory, or, to Victory.*

Maſt. You have judged very right, and ſo indeed ſhould we read them; For the word ἐκβάλλειν, which we render [*ſhall ſend forth*] is of the ſame ſignification with ἐκφέρειν, which doth ſignify [*to carry away.*] But you muſt bear with more faults in the Tranſlation of your Teſtament than this, and I hope you will bear with me, if I tell you plainly of them when I meet with them.

Sch.

Sch. I beſeech you do, for though I have a very great opinion of thoſe Men who did tranſlate the Teſtament; yet I would be loth to be a loſer by my reverence. But if you pleaſe, I will proceed in framing my Objections.

Maſt. You ſhall not need, for I foreſee whither you are driving, even towards the great Scruple that affrights the World, the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, of which there is mention in this Chapter, upon the occaſion of Chriſts healing of the blind and dumb man, poſſeſſed of the Devil, in the 22 Verſe of this Chapter.

Sch. I was indeed, and therefore if you pleaſe, let us come unto that Story.

Maſt. With all my heart; And firſt, I muſt let you know, that ſo ſoon

ſoon as the Phariſees ſaw that great Miracle which Chriſt had done; they ſaid, *that he caſteth out Devils by* Beelzebub, *the Prince of the Devils,* in the 24*th verſe* of this Chapter; and truly this was no unuſual practice amongſt the Sorcerers and Magicians, as is evident by many of the ancient Poets: when they could not prevail any other way, to uſe the help of the great and chiefeſt Devil (whoſe name they would threaten him to publiſh, if he did not help them) to expell, or caſt out other leſs Devils that poſſeſſed Men; In *Iamblichus* there is mention of that Form, in which they threatned him; and *Porphiry* ſays, that his name was *Serapis.* But, our Saviour ſufficiently refuteth that calumny, ſeveral ways. *Firſt,* By

a common and known Axiom amongſt themſelves, *Every Kingdom divided*, &c. and the meaning thereof is this; That the Devils are wiſe, there is no queſtion: but they that are wiſe, will rather ſeek to eſtabliſh Themſelves and their own Power, which is done by Concord and Agreement, than to diſtract and diſlocate it, which is done by Faction and Diviſion; therefore it is not likely that the Devils will ſo differ and diſagree, as the one to expell the other, as they would perſwade the World. *Secondly*, By Retortion, in theſe words, *If I by* Beelzebub *do caſt out Devils, by whom do your children caſt them out?* verſ. 27. And the force of Chriſts Argument is this: In a like Cauſe, Equity will that men give a like judgment; when your Diſciples

Diſciples do caſt out Devils, do not you think that they caſt them out by a divine Power? Therefore ſo ſhould you even think of me, if you thought aright: But I ſhould take this to be an *Ironie* rather.

Sch. I confeſs I did partly conceive the Scope of theſe two Arguments before, but that which follows, I do not underſtand, *But if I caſt out Devils by the Spirit of God, then is the Kingdom of God come unto you:* Pray make me underſtand it, that is, *Firſt*, What is meant by the [*Kingdom of God?*] *Secondly*, What is the meaning of this Conſequence, *If I by the Spirit of God caſt out Devils, then is the Kingdom of God come unto you*, For I ſee not how it follows.

Maſt. By the Kingdom of God

is meant the Time of the Meſſiah's being in the World, as in *Dan.* 4. 29. and *Dan.* 7. 14. And the Conſequence there inferred, is this, That as God, by ſundry Works and Miracles, gave his people of *Iſrael* a Sign of their inſtant Deliverance out of *Egypt*; So the great Miracles of Chriſt, were ordained by him, to be a Sign unto the World of a greater Deliverance, which was now working for them; and therefore where they ſaw the one, they ſhould expect the other.

Sch. I believe you have gueſſed right; But what ſay you to the Verſe which follows, *Or elſe how can one enter into a ſtrong mans houſe, and ſpoil his Goods*, &c. It looks like another Argument, which Chriſt uſeth in his own defence againſt this

this Calumny of the Phariſees, but I confeſs, I do not yet apprehend it.

Maſt. It is not unlikely, but anon you will. This is indeed a third Argument of Chriſts, and it toucheth to the quick; for whereas his other two ſerved onely to convince certain men, this comes to the very thing it ſelf, and quite overthrows it: There have been, ſaith Chriſt, who have caſt out Devils through *Beelzebub*: it may be ſo, but this hath been without any harm or loſs, from the one unto the other; it hath not come to ſpoiling of Goods, to extirpate out of the minds of men any of their ſins, but rather to encreaſe them: this hath been nothing but a meer colluſion and cheat: But when I caſt out Devils, you may

ſee I ſpoil them to the purpoſe, I rob them of their power; for, I plant in the minds of men ſuch Doctrine, as will admit of no vice and wickedneſs to be near it, (wherein the Power of the Devil does conſiſt) and therefore you may well imagine, that I am in good earneſt; for, I bind him and ſpoil him; which no one Devil ever yet did unto another, or ever will.

Schol. I ſhall deſire to put you to no more trouble in this *Verſe*: If you pleaſe, let us paſs unto the next.

Maſt. As I take it, that is this; *He that is not with me, is againſt me; and he that gathereth not with me, ſcattereth abroad.*

Schol. Truly, as the words ſtand alone, I ſhould not trouble you

you at all with them, for to my thinking, they are eaſie enough; but, as they follow upon what went before, I ſee not what our Saviour Chriſt might intend by them.

Maſt. Having declared himſelf to be ſo far from caſting out Devils in the name of *Beelzebub*, that He laboured to bind even *Beelzebub* himſelf, and to ſpoil him of all his power, which he exerciſed in the hearts of wicked men; He carries the conſideration of this Enmity between the Devil and Himſelf to ſuch a height, as that He will not admit of any Neutrality, in any other Man; profeſſing, that whoſoever is not the Devil's enemy, is his; according to that Axiom of the Wars, *Medii habentur pro Hoſtibus*: All indif-

ferent men are Enemies. And if all this be not enough to ſhew how far He was from operating by the help of Satan, ſurely, nothing can be. And therefore having ſaid this, conceiving he had ſaid as much as Man could ſay, He adds: *Wherefore I ſay unto you,* (verſ. 31.) that is, ſeeing it is evident by theſe Reaſons and Arguments, that all the Signs and Miracles which I do, I do by the Power of God, and not by the help of the Devil: Conſider what a wretched puniſhment you draw upon your ſelves, that thus do ſlander and bely me. This Connexion St. *Mark* does teach us plainly, Ch. 3. 30. where he ſays: Becauſe they ſaid, *He hath an unclean Spirit.* And yet it is to be conſidered, that our Saviour Chriſt proceeds

proceeds not meerly upon the ſtrength of his own Arguments; but as knowing their Thoughts, as St. *Matthew* tells us, in the 25*th verſe* of this Chapter, that is, He ſaw in unto them, and He knew that They verily believed, that the Miracle which he wrought, was wrought by the Power of God; but yet he ſaw, that they would rather invent any Lye, or aſperſe him with any ſlander (though they knew it well enough to be a Lye and ſlander) then to ſuffer the People to forſake their *Chair*, and to follow Chriſt.

Schol. I thank you, Sir, for this pains which you have taken, to prepare me for the underſtanding of my great Doubt, which now methinks, I begin to have a little

glimpſe of, but deſire you to give me better Light.

Maſt. I ſhall: But firſt, I would gladly know what you conceive of thoſe words, in the 31. *verſe*. *All manner of Sin and Blaſphemy ſhall be forgiven unto men*; becauſe, by underſtanding of what ſin ſhall be forgiven, you will the more eaſily underſtand me, when I tell you, what manner of ſin ſhall not.

Schol. Why Sir, I underſtand any manner of ſin whatſoever: and I underſtand the ſin of the Holy Ghoſt, to be the only ſin which ſhall never be forgiven.

Maſt. I did fear as much, and therefore I did ask you; But you muſt know that you are much miſtaken, both in the one and in the other opinion; For *Firſt*, It is to be conſidered, that Chriſt ſpeaks not

not of all ſin, but of that ſin, which is Blaſphemy or Calumny, (for there are many other ſins which will never be forgiven, as well as the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt,) And therefore in the next *Verſe* he ſaith, *Whoſoever ſpeaketh a word againſt the Son of Man*, that is, whoſoever ſlandereth or calumniateth any other man, *it ſhall be forgiven him*; And in thoſe words he expoundeth what he means by Sin and Blaſphemy. *Secondly*, It is to be conſidered, that when he ſaith, *All manner of Sin and Blaſphemy ſhall be forgiven*, there is an Hebraiſm in thoſe words, which is often met withall in Scripture; as in the 5 Chap. of St. *Matthew*, *Heaven and Earth ſhall paſs away, but my Words ſhall not paſs away*; that is, Heaven and Earth ſhall ſooner paſs

paſs away, than my words ſhall paſs away; (and ſo St. *Luke* reads them) not that Heaven and Earth ſhall ever paſs away, but that, if it were poſſible, they ſhould ſooner paſs away than his Word ſhal. The meaning therefore of the words is onely this, All manner of Calumnies and Slanders, are heavy ſins, and ſhall hardly be forgiven to thoſe that do commit them; but they will be more eaſily forgiven, than that Calumny, which he knows to be a Calumny, who doth commit it: and this Chriſt calls Blaſpheming of the Holy Ghoſt; which was the Caſe of theſe Phariſees, who calumniated the Miracle which our Saviour wrought, as proceeding from the Devil, which their own Conſci-

ence

ence told them, iſſued from the Holy Spirit of God.

Sch. I confeſs, Sir, this is very plain and eaſie; and I pray, proceed to the 33. *verſe. Either make the Tree good, and his Fruit good,* &c. ſaith Chriſt: The dependance of thoſe words, is this: You ſay, I work by the Devil, ſaith Chriſt: But you do not ſee any other work of mine, beſides this Miracle, which looks like a work of the Devil: You ſee, I go about doing good; I exhort People to Repentance, I ſhew them the way to Heaven: Theſe are no works which the Devils uſe to do: Therefore, either ſay, that I do all this in the name of *Beelzebub* too; or elſe, acknowledge that I do my Miracles by the Power of God: for, Men judge of the Quality of the Mind,

Mind, by the common Actions, or Habits of their Life, as they do of Trees, by the Fruits which they produce, be they good or evil. And that this is true, ſaith Chriſt, you may judge by your own ſelves: For, *How can ye, being evil, ſpeak good things?* ſaith He, *ver.* 34. That is, you can never do it. A diſſembled and forc'd Mind will quickly ſhew it ſelf, ſome way or other, and will return unto its wonted habit; and therefore, as you may judge by your ſelves, that becauſe you ſpeak and do nothing but that which is evil, therefore you your ſelves are evil: So you ſhould judge of Me, that becauſe you ſee, I ſay and do nothing but that which is Good, therefore I am good; and therefore

that

that Spirit which works in Me is good.

Schol. I apprehend all this; and therefore ſhall ſave you the labour of expounding that which follows, for I ſee, it all tends to the ſame end and ſcope; only, methinks I am much ſtreightned in my mind, about the 36*th verſe*, which forbids *all idle words*: for, if we muſt give account of every one ſuch, God be merciful unto me, and to many thouſand more; Pray, make me to underſtand the full latitude of this Commination of Chriſt.

Maſt. Whatſoever is meant by this *idle Word* here, you may be ſure it hath reference to that Word which the Phariſees had ſpoke of Chriſt, when they ſaid, *He caſt out Devils in the name of Beelzebub*, for Chriſt hath not done with this Calumny

Calumny of theirs yet; but continues his diſcourſe upon it, till the 38. *Verſe* of this Chapter; Now conſidering this [*Idle Word*] in that reference, it is moſt reaſonable to expound it, not of every Word which a man ſpeaks, of which there is no profit, or which is good for nought, (for if that Expoſition ſhould be true, which God forbid, yet it were not pertinent,) but of ſuch a Word, wherein there is no Truth; For by *Idle*, and *Vain*, in holy Scripture, is often underſtood that which is falſe: And ſo to take the Name of God in Vain, in the Commandments, is to ſwear falſely: So that the Scope of Chriſt in thoſe Words is this, Do you think that you ſhall eſcape for this horrid Calumny which you have caſt upon me, know-

knowing it to be a Calumny in your own hearts? I tell you nay; for no man ſhall eſcape in the day of Judgment, for calumniating another man falſely, though he do not know that that Calumny is falſe; and therefore much leſs ſhall you. By which we may learn, if not to avoid all idle Words, (which to the nature and education of man is almoſt quite impoſſible,) yet to beware of calumniating perſons, not only when we know that Calumny is falſe, (which doubtleſs is a very grievous ſin) but when we are not evidently aſcertain'd that the thing is true. And therefore it is the ſpecial Office of a good Chriſtian, to refrain his Tongue altogether in that Point, for it is a rare thing for a man to give himſelf

ſelf the liberty, to repeat that of another which is falſe, and not to wiſh it true.

Sch. I thank you for this Satisfaction, and by Gods help ſhall endeavour to frame my Life and Converſation accordingly; for I perceive it is a Sin, which the World taketh little notice of; though indeed it be the deſtruction of Charity, without which no man is a Chriſtian: For ſo they avoid doing of that which is notoriouſly Evil, they care not what they ſay of any man. Now if you pleaſe, we will proceed to that which follows, I pray, what do the Scribes and Phariſees mean to deſire a Sign from Chriſt, in the 31*th* Verſe of this Chapter, who had ſeen ſo many before;

for

for, methinks it ſeems a very impertinent Requeſt.

Maſt. Some Interpreters are of opinion that theſe Scribes and Phariſees were not the ſame, who ſaw thoſe late Miracles which our Saviour did; and they ground their opinion upon *Luke* 11. 16. where it is ſaid, *That others tempted him, ſeeking a Sign from Heaven*; But, upon examination, that opinion will not hold. The better anſwer is, that they did not deſire a bare ſign, or a Miracle, of which they had ſeen enough already; but they deſired a Sign from Heaven (as St. *Luke* ſpeaks) that is, that God by ſome ſtrange Prodigy there, ſhould declare him to be a Prophet ſent from him, if ſo be he were ſo indeed: For, as for thoſe Miracles which he did on Earth, they were

not ſatisfied with them, as apprehending them pendulous between two ſeveral Powers; for as they they might come from God, ſo they might come from the Devil; but, in Heaven they thought the Devil had no Power.

Schol. I like your reaſon well; but, I pray, what doth Chriſt mean by that anſwer which he gives to their requeſt in the 39, 40, 41, and 42 *verſes* for I do not underſtand it perfectly?

Maſt. The meaning of His Anſwer is this; You would have a Sign from Heaven, and then you will believe me: God, that will omit no occaſion to leave you unexcuſable, hath given you Signs enough, here upon Earth; but he is not bound to ſatisfie your humours, and give them where and when

when you would have them, he knows theſe which you have ſeen are ſufficient to perſwade Belief, if that your Avarice, and Profit, and Places which you hold in the preſent *Jewiſh* State, did not make you ſeek all Occaſions and Cloaks for your Incredulity: And therefore, if thoſe Signs which I have done on Earth, will not ſerve you; you ſhall have none from Heaven, but if you will, you ſhall have one from under the Earth, even the Sign of the Prophet *Jonas*, and that Sign not a Sign to convert you, who after ſo many Signs and Miracles will not be converted; but a Sign of my Innocence, and your Malice, which will perſecute me even unto the death, for all that Good which I have done amongſt you.

Sch. By this which you have ſaid, I do not only perceive the Scope and Purport of Chriſts Anſwer, which he gives them; but the Drift of *Verſe* 41 and 42 alſo, wherein he complains, That they who had had ſo many Signs done amongſt them, never would believe; whereas thoſe of *Nineveh*, and the *Queen* of the *South*, without any Sign or Miracle wrought, either by *Jonas*, or *Solomon*, believed all that was told them. But, I pray, how comes the next Diſcourſe in, concerning the unclean Spirit going out of a man, in the 43 *Verſe*? And what is the Scope and Purport of that Diſcourſe?

Maſt. It is not improbable, That our Saviour Chriſt, being much afflicted with the evil and incredulous hearts of the people

of

of the *Jews*, taketh a kind of Survey of that whole Nation, even from the time wherein they were firſt led away captive into *Babylon*, to the time when they were utterly deſtroyed by *Titus*. Before their Captivity, they were full of all manner of Wickedneſs, as appeareth by the Prophets; Under their Captivity, they were a little reclaimed, and upon that Amendment, were brought back again: But then after their Return, in the times not long before our Saviours coming, they fell into ſuch Vices, as were abominable, even in the Heathens themſelves, as is manifeſt in Story; and to ſhut up all, added thereunto the Contempt of their own Meſſiah, ſent amongſt them with ſo much power, and yet with

ſo much meekneſs, as man never came: Whereupon being juſtly forſaken of God, whom they had thus forſook, they became the moſt wretched and vicious people in the World, as *Joſephus* doth deſcribe them to be, about their latter times; And this Contemplation of their miſerable Condition, our Saviour ſeems to inſinuate, even unto themſelves, in this kind of Parable of the unclean Spirit going out of a man, and returning back again. Of which, If that which I have ſaid be not the Occaſion, (as I do not avow, but only offer it unto you) yet certainly this is the ſence, That thoſe men, who have once left and forſaken the vicious courſes of their carnal life, if they ever relapſe, and fall back again into them;

all

all their latter ſins are far more ſinful than their former; Almighty God juſtly revenging the Contempt of that Grace, which he hath offered to them, by giving them up to all manner of wickedneſs and uncleanneſs.

Sch. I think you have gueſſed right, and to the purpoſe; But there are ſome terms, and phraſes in this Parable or Story, or whatſoever you will call it, which I do not underſtand as, *Firſt* I pray what do you think Chriſt means *by walking through dry places, and ſeeking reſt, and finding none.*

Maſt. Dry and ſandy Grounds are no fit places of Habitation, and ſuch kind of places are all thoſe places where the Devil doth abide when he is out of man, who is only capable of Vice and Sin,

wherein the Devil taketh pleaſure: And the meaning of Chriſt is this, That as a man that travels, is wearied with heavy, ſandy, and dry way, more than with green, ſoft, and pleaſant Fields; ſo the Devil is not half ſo well ſatisfied, when he enters into any other Creature, as when he enters into Man.

Schol. It may be ſo indeed but then, why taketh he ſeven Spirits, more wicked than himſelf? why is the number of Seven here pitched on, more than any other?

Maſt. The Number of Seven is the Number of Perfection, or the ſignification of that which, in its own kind, is grown to full maturity, whether it be good or evil. So St. *John* calleth the Holy Spirit of God the *Seven Spirits*, Rev. 1.4.

So

So the Barren is ſaid to have *born Seven*, 1 Sam. 2.5. that is, to have been as fruitful as any other Woman is, or can be. And therefore when the unclean Spirit is ſaid to take Seven other Spirits with him, the meaning only is, that that man becomes perfectly wicked, when that Spirit once returns again, whom before he had caſt out.

Sch. I approve your Expoſition of the Word, and think it likely. But I pray can you gueſs what buſineſs the Virgin, and the Brethren of Chriſt might have with him, becauſe the Scripture ſaith *They ſtaied without, to ſpeak with him*, in the 47 Verſe of this Chapter; peradventure you may think me curious, and therefore if Expoſitors have made no Con-

Conjecture thereupon, I will not urge you.

Maſt. Truly they have, and I ſhall not conceal it from you: They do imagine, that his Mother and his Kindred, having had ſome Inckling of the Phariſees conſpiring againſt him, to do him miſchief, deſired to ſpeak with him in private, and to contrive ſome way, to withdraw him out of danger: This will ſeem the more probable, if we conſider that which St. *Mark* ſaith, *Chap.* 3. 21. *That his Friends would fain have laid hold on him, ſaying, that he was beſide himſelf*; which in all likelihood, they ſaid to make the Phariſees the leſs active in contriving any miſchief to him, as conceiving him a fitter Subject for their pity, than their hate; But it ſeems

Chriſt

Chriſt would not hearken unto them, nay would not know them, as appears by the three laſt *Verſes* of this Chapter, which are ſo plain and eaſy, that I dare not ſuſpect your ſenſe, and apprehenſion of them.

FINIS.

A

TRACT

Concerning the

Power of the KEYS

AND

Auricular Confession.

By the ever Memorable

Mr. *JOHN HALES*,

of *Eaton-Colledge*, &c.

Printed, 1677.

A Tract concerning the Power of the KEYS, *and* AURICULAR CONFESSION.

IN opening the Point concerning the Doctrine of the *Keys* of the *Kingdom of Heaven*, I will follow those Lines, that Tract, which your self hath been pleased to set me. Yet first, ere I come to your particulars, I will discover, as far as generality will give me leave, what it is which we intend, when we use this phrase of Speech. At the first appearance, it is plain, the form

form of words is not Proper, but Metaphorical. Now ſome Truth there is in that which you learnt in the Books of your Minority, from your *Ariſtotle*, πᾶν ἀσαφὲς τὸ κατὰ μεταφορὰν λεγόμενον; and indeed could we but once agree what it is which that Metaphor doth intimate, the greateſt part of the Diſpute were at an end. The natural way to diſcover this, is to ſee what the Uſe of *Keys*, properly taken, is; and after that, what means they are, which in our endeavours to attain to the *Kingdom of Heaven*, have ſomething proportionable to the Uſe of *Keys*: and this being once diſcovered, there can remain no Queſtion What are the *Keys*.

Now nothing is more known, than that the only Uſe of *Keys* is to Open and Shut, to admit us Unto,

or

or exclude us from the possession of what we seek. Now since the *Kingdom of Heaven* is compared to a House, from which all the Sons of *Adam*, by Nature are excluded; whatsoever then it is that gives us way, that removes all Obstacles which hinder us from entrance of that House, that certainly must be understood by the Name of *Keys*. Now all these means, or whatsoever else it is which doth further us towards the possessing our selves of Eternal Life, they were all laid down in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, committed by him fully and first of all to the dispensation of the blessed Apostles, to be reported by them, or their means, all the World over. So that I think I may safely lay thus much for the first Ground of the Question be-

Regnū Dei hic est Ecclesia (nō cœlū) in terris militans. vid. pag. 156.

twixt your ſelf and me, *Claves Regni Cœlorum ſunt Doctrina Evangelii.*

Now ſince Keyes are nothing without ſome hand to manage them, we muſt in the ſecond place diſcover into whoſe hands they are committed. And for this purpoſe, firſt of all, It muſt not be denyed that principally and properly, (I might well enough add only, if I liſted, but that I ſpare you) the Hand of God it is, that manages and applies theſe *Keys*; For of God and Chriſt it is written, *He hath the Keys, he opens, and no man ſhuts; he ſhuts, and no man opens.* Yet ſince it hath pleaſed God to uſe the Miniſtry of Men, to the ſaving of Men, and bringing them into the Kingdom of Heaven; In a ſecondary ſenſe the

the *Keys* of that Kingdom are ſaid to be put into the hands of Men. In as much as it hath pleaſed the Wiſdom of God, not to uſe theſe *Keys*, at leaſt as far as concerns the beneficial and opening part, ſome act of Man not firſt premiſed; for ſince that Faith in Jeſus Chriſt is the Sum of the Doctrine of the Goſpel, and Faith cometh not but by hearing, and hearing cometh not but by preaching, and preaching is the act of Men alone, (for God employs not Angels in that behalf,) It appears that this Preaching, or manifeſtation of the Doctrine of the Goſpel not performed, the *Keys* muſt needs be unprofitable. By the manifeſtation of the Goſpel of God, I mean not only the labour of the lip, in expounding, praying, reproving,

or the like, but the adminiſtration of Sacraments, the acting (if any thing beyond this is to be acted) whatſoever the manifeſtation of the Goſpel requireth. So that I think I may ſet down for a ſecond Ground towards the ſetling of the Point in queſtion, thus much, That the managing or application of the *Keys*, ſo far forth as men are intruſted with them, is, *The Manifeſtation of the Doctrine of the Goſpel.* Thus far have we opened in general the Subſtance of the *Keys*, and the Uſe of them. I come now to your *Queries.*

Firſt, You ask of the quality of the Apoſtles receiving this Power, whether they had it as Judges *Authoritativè*, or as Meſſengers, *Declaratativè*, only to *propound*, or *denounce?* You manifeſt your ſelf for

for the former, and Reaſons you bring, ſuch as they be. Your Reaſons I ſhall conſider in their place, but I muſt firſt tell you that you ask amiſs, for your queſtion is concerning the whole Power of the *Keys*, but you anſwer only of a part, that is, of Sacramental Abſolution only, as if all the Power of the *Keys* reſided there. So that here you uſe the Fallacy *plurium Interrogationum*; And I might well grant you, that indeed that part were *Judicativè*, but yet contend that all the reſt were only *Declarativè*. To reduce you therefore, I muſt do with you, as Phyſicians in ſome caſes deal with their Patients; ere I can come to purge the humour you are ſick of, I muſt a little prepare you. The power of the *Keys* is expreſt by

the Learned in three yokes, or pairs of Words.

1. *To remit, and to retain.*
2. *To looſe, and to bind.*
3. *To open, and to ſhut.*

On the one ſide, to *remit*, to *looſe*, to *open*, which is the one half of the power, agree in one, and ſignify the ſame thing; ſo do the other three, to *retain*, to *bind*, to *ſhut*, which contain the other half. To your Queſtion then, whether the power of the *Keys* be declarative only, I anſwer firſt: For this latter part or half, it is meerly declarative, neither can it be otherwiſe; which that you may ſee with your eyes, I muſt requeſt you to obſerve, That all ſhutting of the Kingdom of Heaven, is either common to all, or caſual, befalling only ſome. The common

Exclu-

Excluſion is that ſtate of Nature, wherein we all are involved, as we ſpring from the firſt *Adam*; The ſecond Excluſion is that which befals Chriſtians relapſing into ſin. The firſt ſhutting was at the fall, and was then Prefigured unto us, by the barring up of the way unto the Tree of Life. What active, what judiciary part can any Miniſter of the Goſpel have here? all that the Apoſtles could do here, was but to open to men this their miſery, a thing, before the death of our Saviour, either very ſparingly, or not at all revealed. Of this therefore you muſt needs quit your hands, and ſo you muſt of the other, I mean excluſion upon caſuality and relapſe. For when a man converted to Chriſtianity, falleth eſtſoons into

ſome mortal ſin, doth the Gate of Heaven ſtand open to him, till he fall upon ſome curſt Prieſt, that uſed his Key to ſhut it?

vid. pag. 149.

There are in the World a kind of deceitful Locks with ſliding Bolts, I have ſeen my ſelf and others much deceived by them, when the doors have fallen at our heels, and lockt us out when we intended no ſuch thing. *Sir*, Heaven door hath a ſliding Lock, upon occaſion of mortal ſin, it will ſhut without any uſe of a Key.

Perchance I do not well, παιζειν ἐν μὴ παιπτοῖς, yet the ſober meaningof what I have ſpoken merrily, is but this, that either you muſtmake the Miniſtry of the Goſpel only Declarative, or elſe it will follow that every impenitent Relapſer, that hath the good fortune to eſcape

ſcape the Prieſts being privy to his Sin, is like to find Heaven open at the laſt. So then it is apparent, that notwithſtanding your heaping up of Interrogatories, and your preſſing of *Ligaveritis & vos*, and telling me what I never knew, that *Solvere* and *Ligare* be Actives; yet in this part of our Power, all your Activity is loſt, and there remains nothing for you but to report upon good evidence, what you find done by your betters to your hand.

Half your Juriſdiction then is fallen: and if I had no other *Medium* but this: I might with good probability conclude againſt you for the other part. For if the one half made in the ſame Form, in the like phraſe and garb of ſpeech, yet enforceth no more but Declaration

ration and Denouncing: then why ſhould you think the other half, (which in all likelyhood is homogeneal to the former) to be more? Nay, there is far more natural Equity that you ſhould be here only Declarative than in the other. Politicians tell us, That it is Wiſdom for Princes, who deſire to gain the love of their Subjects, to adminiſter themſelves all Favours and Graces, but to leave action of Juſtice and Harſhneſs to be performed by others.

Sir, No Prince can be ſo ambitious of the Love of his Subjects as God is of the Love of Mankind: why then ſhould I think him ſo ill a Politician, as to make himſelf the Adminiſtrator of the Rough, Unpleaſing, Love-killing Offices, of *Binding*, *Shutting*, *Retaining*;

ing; and then paſs over to the Prieſt, the diſpenſation of the Fair, Well-ſpoken, Ingratiating Offices of *Remitting*, *Looſing*, and *Opening*? But I will leave this kind of Topick and Dialectical arguing, becauſe you are a pretender to convincing Reaſons; I will directly enter even upon that part of your power of *Opening*, and *Remitting*, being the other part of your Territory, and by main ſtrength, take all activity from you there too. Give me leave to ask you one Queſtion, you may very well favour me ſo far, for you have asked me very many.

The Converſion of a Sinner, is it an act of the Keys, *yea or no*?

By your Principles it is not; for you make the power of the *Keys* to be judiciary, and therefore the

the Converſion of an Infidel pertains not to them: The Church of *Rome* will help you with a *Medium* to make this Argument good. *Do we not judge thoſe that are within? for thoſe that are without, God ſhall judge*, ſaith *Paul*: Whence ſhe infers, That a converted Infidel, not yet admitted to the Church, is a Stranger to the Judiciary Power of the *Keys*; but being once admitted into the Church, he is now become the Churches Subject, and ſo fit matter for the Prieſt to work on upon his next Relapſe. What think you of this Reaſon? Do you take it to be good? Take heed; or elſe it will give you a deadly ſtripe. For the Converſion of an Infidel, out of queſtion is a moſt proper act of the *Keys*. For, ſince the opening of the Kingdom of Heaven

ven is confeſt to belong unto the *Keys*; and Heaven, which was ſhut againſt the Infidel in time of his Infidelity, upon his Converſion is acknowledged to be opened unto him; certainly whoever converted him, uſed the *Keys*; or elſe he muſt pretend to have either a *Pick-lock*, or the Herb *Lunaria*, which, they ſay, makes Locks fall off from Doors, and the Fetters from Horſes heels. If then the Converſion of a Sinner be an act of the *Keys*, and by the Argument of the Church of *Rome* it be not judiciary, it follows then, that all Acts of the *Keys* are not Judiciary; and if not Judiciary, then Declarative only? For betwixt theſe two I know no mean.

But becauſe to diſpute againſt a man out of his own Principles, which

which perchance are false (for this we know oft falls out, that by the power of *Syllogisms*, men may and do draw True Conclusions from False Premises) because, I say, thus to do, in the judgment of *Aristotle*, leaves a man πεπεισμένον μὲν ὠφελημένον δ' οὔ; and I am willing not only to persuade you, but to better you: I will draw the little which remains to be said in this Point, from other Places.

First, In all the Apostles practice in Converting *Jews* and *Gentils*, find you any thing like unto the act of any Judiciary Power? They neither did nor could use any such thing. That they did not, appears by *Philip*, who having Catechised the *Eunuch*, and finding him desirous of Baptism, immediately upon profession of his Faith, admitted

mitted him into the Church. That they neither did nor could, appears by *Peter* and the rest of the Apoſtles in the *Acts*, who could never in the ſpace of an afternoon, being none but themſelves, have converted three thouſand ſouls, had they taken any ſuch way, as you ſeem to miſfancy. Again, imagine with your ſelf all circumſtances you can, which are of force to make a power judiciary, apply them all to the practice of the Apoſtles, in the Converſion of Infidels, and if you find any one of them agree to that action, let me be challenged upon it, and be thought to have abuſed you with a Fallacy.

To conclude then, ſince your *Ligaveritis*, which is the one half of your pretended Juriſdiction, pretends

pretends to nothing above Declarative: And ſince your *Solveritis*, in ſo great an act as is the Converſion of Infidels, lays claim to no more, what act of the power of the *Keys* is it, wherein we may conceive hope of finding any thing active or judiciary? I ſee what you will ſay, There yet remains a part, you think, wherein you have hope to ſpeed, and that is the reconciling of relapſing Chriſtians: As you fancy that in every ſinning Chriſtian, there is a duty binding him to repair, and lay his ſin open to the Miniſter of the Goſpel, and in him a power to conſider of the ſins of ſuch as repair unto him, to weigh particulars, to conſider circumſtances, and occaſions, and according to true Judgment, either upon penance impoſed to abſolve ſin, (which

(which you call remitting of the ſin) or to with-hold him for a time, from participation of holy duties with Catholick Chriſtians, which you call retaining of ſins, ſuppoſing that God doth the like in Heaven, as it is written, *What you bind in Earth, is bound in Heaven, and what you looſe in Earth, is looſed in Heaven.* Now the Rock on which you labour to found ſo extravagant a Conceit, is no other than the Words which I have quoted out of Scripture; you preſs earneſtly the *Ligaveritis & vos*, all which can yield you ſmall relief; for if they help you not at all in thoſe weighty parts of the Power of the *Keys*, which but now were laid before you; by what Analogy can you expect they ſhould afford you any aſſiſtance here? As

is *Ligare*, ſo is *Solvere*; as is the Converſion of an Infidel, ſo is the reconciling of a relapſing Chriſtian, for any thing you can make appear; Either all is *Declarative*, which is very poſſible, and in many caſes neceſſary, or all *Judicative*, which in ſome caſes is impoſſible, and in none neceſſary; ſo that to fit the Scripture to your Fancy, you are conſtrained to diſtract and rend it without any Warrant at all. But you have found out in the Text a ſtronger Argument againſt the declarative Power, I contend for: You eſpie an *Inſufflavit*, a great, a ſolemn, and unwonted Ceremony, undoubtedly concluding ſome greater matter than a poor power declarative: *What? did our ſerious Maſter thus ſpend his breath to no purpoſe, and*

like

like a Hocus Pocus *with ſo much ſhew act us a ſolemn nothing* ? I pray whoſe words are theſe ? I ſhould have thought them to have been *Porphiries*, or *Julians*, (but that I know your hand) for you ſubſcribed not your name to your letters : Ἀφίσατο ἀκέρδεια λέλογχε δαίμονα κακαγόρως : They are the Words of your *Pindarus*, upon an occaſion not much unlike unto this

Sir, you have no Skill to judg, or ſet a price upon ſo divine an act; He loſt not his breath, when he ſpent his *Inſufflavit* ; he opened their wits, that they might underſtand the Scripture ; he revealed to them the Myſteries of Jeſus Chriſt, dying and riſing again for the Worlds ſalvation, the greateſt news that ever was reported in the World, and till then concealed ;

He commanded them to be the first bringers of this good News, and that they might the more undauntedly perform their Charge, he endowed them with Infallibility, with infinite Constancy and Fortitude, with Power of working such Wonders as none could do unless God were with them. *Appello Conscientiam tuam*: Were those things such nothings, that they deserve to be thus jeered? But that befalls you which befalls the Stares that dwell in the Steeple, who fear not the Bells, because they hear them every day. These wonderful Benefits of God have every day sounded in your ears, and the frequency of them hath taught you to forget your Reverence to them. Yet all this *Insufflavit*, this Ceremony, was for no other end but to fur-

further a *Declarative* Power; Their undaunted Fortitude, their power of Miracling, their Infallibility did but add countenance and ſtrength to their *Declarative* Power, by by which they went up and down the World, to manifeſt the good tydings of Salvation. So that even theſe which ſerved thus to ſet off the Goſpel, were nothing elſe but means of the better manifeſtation of it, therefore may they very well paſs, if not amongſt the *Keys*, yet amongſt the neceſſary Wards. Whereas your Fancy of an active or judicative Power in the Prieſt, concurring with God in reconciling relapſing Chriſtians, is neither one nor other, but is indeed like unto the work of ſome deceitful Smith, who the better to countenance and grace his work,

adds to his Key ſuperfluous and idle Wards, which in the opening of the Lock, are of no uſe at all.

To your ſecond Query, Whether the *Keys* were confined to the Apoſtles only? The Anſwer is in no caſe hard to give, it may perchance in ſome caſe be dangerous; for there is a Generation of men in the World (the Clergy they call them) who impropriate the *Keys* unto themſelves, and would be very angrie to underſtand, that others from themſelves ſhould claim a right unto them. To your Queſtion then, no doubt but originally none received the *Keys* from the mouth of our Saviour, but the Apoſtles only; none did nor ever could manage them with that authority and ſplendor

as

as the Apoſtles did, who were above all moſt amply furniſhed with all things fitting ſo great a work. For whereas you ſeem to intimate, that the preaching Miſſion was communicated to others, as the ſeventy two Diſciples, as well as the Apoſtles; you do but miſtake your ſelf, if you conceive that the *Keys* of the Goſpel were any way committed to them; for concerning the Myſteries of Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified for the ſins of the World (wherein indeed the opening of the Kingdom of Heaven did conſiſt) they received it not, they knew it not. To be the prime Reporters of this, was an honour imparted only to the Apoſtles: Yet were they not ſo imparted, as that they ſhould be confined to them. E-

Every one that heard and received the Light of the ſaving Doctrine from them, ſo far forth as he had underſtanding in the waies of Life, had now the *Keys* of the Kingdom of Heaven committed to his power, both for his own and others uſe. Every one, of what ſtate or condition ſoever, that hath any occaſion offered him, to ſerve another in the ways of Life, Clergie, or Lay, male or female, whatever he be, hath theſe *Keys*, not only for himſelf, but for the benefit of others. For if natural Goodneſs teach every man, *Lumen de Lumine*, *Erranti comitèr monſtrare viam*, &c. Then how much more doth Chriſtian Goodneſs require of every one, to his ability to be a Light to thoſe who ſit in darkneſs, and direct their ſteps, who

who moſt dangerouſly miſtake their way? To ſave a ſoul, every man is a Prieſt. To whom I pray you, is that ſaid in *Leviticus*, *Thou ſhalt not ſee thy Brother ſin, but thou ſhalt reprove, and ſave thy Brother*? And if the Law binds a Man, when he ſaw his enemies Cattel to ſtray, to put them into their way; How much more doth it oblige him to do the like for the Man himſelf? See you not how the whole World conſpires with me in the ſame opinion? Doth not every Father teach his Son, every Maſter his Servant, every Man his Friend. How many of the Laitie in this age, and from time to time, in all ages have by writing for the publick good, propagated the Goſpel of Chriſt, as if ſome ſecret inſtinct of nature had

put

put into mens minds thus to do. I ſhame to dwell ſo long upon ſo plain a Theme, yet becauſe I feel your pulſe, and perceive what it is that troubles you, I muſt ſay ſomething to an Objection, which I know you make. You conceive that forthwith upon this which I have ſaid, muſt needs follow ſome great Confuſion of eſtates, and degrees, the Laitie will ſtraitway get up into our Pulpits, we ſhall loſe our credit, and the adoration which the ſimple ſort do yeild us is in danger to be loſt.

Sir, Fear you not, the ſufficient and able of the Clergy, will reap no diſcountenance, but honour by this: For he that knows how to do well himſelf, will moſt willingly approve what is well done by another. It is extream poverty of mind

mind to ground your Reputation upon another mans Ignorance, and to ſecure your ſelf, you do well, becauſe you perceive perchance, that none can judge how ill you do. Be not angry then to ſee others joyn with you in part of your Charge. *I would all the Lords People did Preach*, and that every Man did think himſelf bound to diſcharge a part of the Common Good: and make account that the Care of other mens Souls concerned him as well as of his own. When the Apoſtles took order to ordain ſome, upon whom the publick burden of Preaching the Goſpel ſhould lie, it was not their purpoſe to impropriate the thing to thoſe perſons alone; but knowing that what was left to the care of all, was commonly worſt

lookt

lookt unto, in wiſe and moſt Chriſtian Care, they deſigned ſome, whoſe duty it ſhould be to wait upon the Goſpel alone, the better to preſerve the Profeſſion to the Worlds end : It hath been the wiſdom of thoſe, who have taken care of the propagation of Arts, and Sciences, not only to appoint means, that multitudes ſhould ſtudy and make profeſſion privately, but that ſome ſhould be conſtituted publick Profeſſors to teach *è Cathedra*, that ſo all might know to whom to repair, in the doubts incident to their faculties, and this hath been thought a ſovereign way to preſerve Sciences. *Sir*, we are the publick Profeſſors of Chriſtianity, we ſpeak *è Cathedra*, which none can do, but ſuch as are ordained. Let the pri-

private profeſſion and practice of Chriſtianity improve it ſelf never ſo much, yet the honour of the publick Profeſſor, ſo he deſerve his place, can never impair. It greives me to ſtand ſo long upon ſo plain, ſo unwelcom a Leſſon, I will eaſe my ſelf and you, and reflect upon your third Query.

In the third place, you require to know, what neceſſity, or what convenience there is of Confeſſion: You mean, I think, that confeſſion, which is as fooliſhly as commonly called Sacramental, for it hath nothing of a Sacrament in it. Did I know your mind a little more in particular, what form of confeſſion you ſpeak of, whether as it is uſed in the Church of *Rome*, or in ſome refined Guiſe,

as

as it ſeems ſome would, who have of late called for it in the Church of *England*, I ſhould ſpeak peradventure more appoſitely to what you deſire. But ſince you have propoſed Confeſſion only in a generality, my anſwer ſhall be in like manner. And

Firſt of all, Confeſſion of ſins is a thing, not only convenient, but unavoidably neceſſary to Salvation, without which none ſhall ever ſee God. And thus far I ſuppoſe, all Chriſtians do agree. The main Difference is in the manner of practiſing it, the Queſtion being, What Parties are to be intereſſed in it? Natural Equity informeth us, that unto every Partie, juſtly offended, Satisfaction ſome way or other is due.

The

The first party wronged in every offence, is God, against whose Honour, and expreſs Command every ſin is committed. To him therefore in the firſt place, Satisfaction is due, by ſubmiſſion and acknowledgment, ſince there remains no other way of compoſition with God. But there are ſome ſins committed againſt God, ſome committed againſt God and Men. In the former it is ſufficient if we pacifie God alone; in the latter, our Neighbour, againſt whom we have treſpaſt, muſt receive Satisfaction for the wrong done him, at leaſt, if it be in the power of the Treſpaſſer. Your Primer of *Sarum* will tell you, *That not to make reſtitution, if you be able, and not to pardon, unavoidably exclude from the Kingdom of Heaven.* Now might

might the Doctrine of Confeſſion and acknowledgment in caſe of Offence given, have been permitted to run fair and clear, as it deſcends from God, and good reaſon, the firſt Fountains of it. There needed no more to be ſaid in this argument, than I have already told you. But I know not what intempeſtive fooliſh Ambition hath troubled the ſtream, and it hath paſt now for a long time (till the Reformation altered it) for a general Doctrine in the Church, That in all kind of ſins, whether againſt God or our Neighbour, there can be no reconciliation betwixt the parties offending, and offended, but by interpoſition of a Preiſt, a thing utterly beſides all reaſon and common ſenſe, that you ſhould open your private

imper-

imperfections to one whom they concern not, (for it is granted, that all Parties concerned in an Offence, muſt have reaſon at the hands of the Offender) and who can no ways help you; For He that is conſcientious of his ſin, (and without trouble of Conſcience I think none would ever repair to his Confeſſor) knows very well, that there is no ſin ſo great, but upon ſubmiſſion, God both can and will pardon it; and none ſo ſmall, but pardon for it muſt be ſought, or elſe he hath been ill catechiſed. And more than this what can any Prieſt tell him: * Your *Pliny*, ſomewhere tells you, *That he that is ſtricken by a Scorpion, if he go immediately, and whiſper it into the ear of*

* *Plin. Nat. Hiſt. l.* 28. *c.* 1.

an Aſs, ſhall find himſelf immediately eaſed: That Sin is a Scorpion, and bites deadly, I have always believed, but that to cure the bite of it, it was a Sovereign Remedy to whiſper it into the Ear of an [ ] a Prieſt, I do as well believe as I do that of *Pliny*. The Patrons of this Fancy, for defect of reaſon and common congruity, are fain to betake themſelves to Scripture; and the miſcheif is, there is there no direct Text for it, and therefore they are conſtrained to help themſelves with a meer conjectural conſequence; For ſince it is taken for certain, that there is a Power to Remit and to Retain ſins, how ſhall they who have this Power given them, know how fit it is to Remit or to Retain a ſin, except they know the ſin, and know

know it they cannot, but by Confeſſion. For anſwer to this,

Firſt, We have found and proved, That the Words of Scripture muſt receive ſuch a ſenſe, as from whence no ſuch Conſequence can be inferred.

Secondly, We have indeavoured to prove, That the Diſpenſation or Application of the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, (being nothing elſe, but the duty of ſaving of Souls) is a Duty, which *pro Occaſione oblatâ*, lies upon every Chriſtian: Which if it be true, (as in good faith I think it,) and the Clergy perceive it, I think they would never go about to urge that Text, although we ſhould yield it them in their own meaning. For they muſt needs ſee, that it follows, that you may as well

make your Muletter, (if you have one) your Confeſſor, as your Pariſh Prieſt. Tell me in good earneſt, if you can, out of what good intent can this deſire to know another mans ſin, which concerns you not, proceed? Is it to teach him that it is a ſin? he knew that, or elſe he had never repaired to you, to confeſs it: Is it to tell him, that he is to repent, to reſtore, to pray, to give alms, *&c.* All this he knew, or elſe he hath had his breeding under an evil Clergy. Yea, but how ſhall the Phyſician cure the Diſeaſe, if he know it not? Suppoſe all Diſeaſes had one Remedy, (as all ſpiritual Diſeaſes have) and what matters it if the Patient be ſick, to know whether it be an Ague, or the Meazels, or the Pleuriſie, ſince one Potion

cures

cures them all? Yea, but if he know not the particulars, how ſhall he judg of the Quantity of the Doſes? for the ſame Diſeaſe upon ſundry circumſtances, may require *Majus* or *Minus* in the Phyſick. This is the pooreſt ſcruple of a thouſand; for in the Regiment of Patients ſpiritually ſick, there can be but one miſtake, that is, if you give too little: Be ſure you give enough, and teach your Patients to think no ſin to be little, (which in men ſpiritually ſick is *Error ſaluberrimus*) and you can never err: For natural Phyſick is only Phyſick; but ſpiritual Phyſick is both Phyſick and Diet, and may be indifferently adminiſtred both to the ſick and the ſound, Repentance perchance only excepted, of which upon occaſion, aſſure

your ſelf you can hardly take too much. What reaſon now can you give me, why you ſhould deſire to dive into any mans Breaſt, & *ſcire Secreta Domûs*? except it be that which followes in the next Verſe, *indè teneri*, as I muſt confeſs, I ſuſpect it is. The truth is, ſome miſtaken Cuſtoms of the ancient Church, the craft and power of the Clergy, the ſimplicity and ignorance of the Laity, theſe begat the *Tragelaphus*, of which we now ſpeak. It may be you take the practice of the ancient Church, and the Point of Excommunication, to make ſomewhat for you: When thoſe Cards ſhall come to be play'd (though that of Church cuſtom is not greatly material, which way ſoever it looks) I believe you will not find the

the Game you look for. Indeed I was once minded to have conſidered ſomething of that: But I think you look for a Letter, not for a Book, and I perceive my ſelf already to have gone beyond the compaſs of a Letter. Another parley therefore, if you pleaſe, ſhall put an end to thoſe and other ſcruples, if any do ariſe. And for the preſent give, I pray you, a little reſpite unto

From my Study, this 8 Day of March. 1637. *Yours,* J. H.

A

TRACT

Concerning

SCHISM

AND

SCHISMATICKS.

WHEREIN

Is briefly discovered the Original Causes of all *Schism.*

By the ever Memorable

Mr. *JOHN HALES,*

of *Eaton-Colledge*, &c.

Never before Printed by the Original Copy.

Printed, 1677.

A TRACT
Concerning
SCHISM.

Hereſie and *Schiſm* as they are in common uſe, are two Theological μορμὼ or *ſcar-crows*, which they, who uphold a party in Religion, uſe to fright away ſuch, as making inquiry into it, are ready to relinquiſh and oppoſe it, if it appear either erroneous or ſuſpicious. For as *Plutarch* reports of a Painter, who having unskilfully painted a Cock, chaſed away all Cocks and Hens, that ſo the imperfection

imperfection of his Art might not appear by comparison with Nature; so men willing for ends to admit of no fancy but their own, endeavour to hinder an inquiry into it by way of comparison of somewhat with it, peradventure truer, that so the deformity of their own might not appear. But howsoever in the common manage, *Heresie* and *Schism* are but ridiculous Terms, yet the things in themselves are of very considerable moment, the one offending against Truth, the other against Charity, and therefore both deadly, where they are not by imputation, but in deed.

It is then a matter of no small importance, truly to descry the nature of them, that so they may fear, who are guilty of them, and they

they on the contrary ſtrengthen themſelves, who through the iniquity of men and times, are injuriouſly charged with them.

Schiſm (for of *Hereſie* we ſhall not now treat, except it be by accident, and that by occaſion of a general miſtake, ſpread throughout all the writings of the Ancients, in which their names are familiarly confounded) *Schiſm*, I ſay, upon the very ſound of the word, imports Diviſion; *Diviſion* is not, but where *Communion* is, or ought to be. Now *Communion* is the ſtrength and ground of all Society, whether *Sacred* or *Civil*; Whoſoever therefore they be, that offend againſt this common Society and Friendlineſs of men, and cauſe ſeparation and breach among them: If it be in civil occaſions, are guilty

ty of Sedition or Rebellion; if it be by occasion of *Ecclesiastical* difference they are guilty of *Schism*: So that *Schism* is an *Ecclesiastical Sedition*, as *Sedition* is a *Lay Schism*. Yet the great benefit of *Communion* notwithstanding, in regard of divers distempers men are subject to, Dissention and Disunion are often necessary; For when either false or uncertain Conclusions are obtruded for Truth, and Acts either unlawful, or ministring just scruple, are required of us to be perform'd; in these cases, Consent were Conspiracy, and open Contestation is not Faction or *Schism*, but due Christian Animosity.

For the further opening therefore of the nature of *Schism*, something must be added by way of difference to distinguish it from necessary

neceſſary Separation, and that is, that the cauſes upon which Diviſion is attempted, proceed not from Paſſion, or Diſtemper, or from Ambition, or Avarice, or ſuch other Ends, as humane folly is apt to purſue; but from well weighed and neceſſary Reaſons, and that, when all other means having been tryed, nothing will ſerve to ſave us from guilt of Conſcience, but open Separation. So that *Schiſm*, if we would define it, is nothing elſe but an unneceſſary Separation of Chriſtians from that part of the viſible Church, of which they were once Members. Now as in Mutinies and Civil Diſſentions, there are two Attendants in ordinary belonging unto them; one the choice of one *Elector* or Guide in

place

place of the General, or ordinary Governor, to rule and guide; the other the appointing of some publick place or Rendezvous, where publick Meetings must be celebrated: So in Church-Dissentions and quarrels, two Appurtenances there are, which serve to make a *Schism* compleat;

First, The choice of a Bishop in opposition to the former, (a thing very frequent amongst the Ancients, and which many times was both the cause and effect of *Schism.*)

Secondly, The erecting of a new Church and Oratory, for the dividing Party to meet in publickly. For till this be done, the *Schism* is but yet in the Womb.

In that late famous Controversy in *Holland*, *De Predestinatione*, &

Auxi-

Auxiliis, as long as the diſagreeing Parties went no further than Diſputes and Pen-combats, the *Schiſm* was all that while unhatched; but as ſoon as one party ſwept an old Cloyſter and by a pretty Art ſuddenly made it a Church, by putting a new Pulpit in it, for the ſeparating Party there to meet; now, what before was a Controverſy, became a formal *Schiſm*. To know no more than this, if you take it to be true, had been enough to direct how you are to judge, and what to think of *Schiſm* and *Schiſmaticks*; yet becauſe in the *Ancients*, (by whom many Men are more affrighted than hurt) much is ſaid, and many fearful Dooms are pronounced in this caſe; will we deſcend a little to conſider of *Schiſms*, as it were by way of Story,

and that partly further to open that which we have ſaid in general, by inſtancing in particulars; and partly to diſabuſe thoſe who reverencing Antiquity more than needs, have ſuffered themſelves to be ſcared with imputation of *Schiſm*, above due meaſure; for what the Ancients ſpake by way of cenſure of *Schiſm* in general, is moſt true; for they ſaw (and it is no great matter to ſee ſo much) that unadviſedly, and upon fancy to break the knot of Union betwixt man and man (eſpecially amongſt Chriſtians, upon whom above all other kind of men, the tye of Love and Communion doth moſt eſpecially reſt) was a crime hardly pardonable, and that nothing Abſolves a man from the guilt of it, but true and unpre-
tended

tended Conſcience; yet when they came to pronounce of *Schiſms* in particular (whether it were becauſe of their own intereſts, or that they ſaw not the Truth, or for what other cauſe God only doth know) their Judgments many times (to ſpeak moſt gently) are juſtly to be ſuſpected; Which that you may ſee, we will range all *Schiſm* into two ranks.

For there is a *Schiſm*, in which only one party is the *Schiſmatick*; for where cauſe of *Schiſm* is neceſſary, there not he that ſeparates, but he that occaſions the ſeparation is the *Schiſmatick*.

Secondly, There is a *Schiſm*, which both parts are the *Schiſmaticks*: For where the occaſion of ſeparation is unneceſſary, neither ſide can be excuſed from the guilt of *Schiſm*.

But you will ask, who shall be the Judg what is necessary? Indeed that is a Question, which hath been often made, but I think scarcely ever truly answered; not because it is a point of great depth or difficulty truly to assoil it, but because the true solution carries fire in the tail of it. For it bringeth with it a peice of Doctrine which is seldom pleasing to Superiors. To you for the present this shall suffice. If so be you be *Animo defœcato*, if you have cleared your self from froath and grownds, if neither sloth, nor fears, nor ambition, nor any tempting Spirits of that nature abuse you, (for these and such as these, are the true Impediments. why both that, and other Questions of the like danger are not truly answered) if all this be,

be, and yet you ſee not how to frame your reſolution, and ſettle your ſelf for that doubt; I will ſay no more of you than was ſaid of *Papias*, St. *John's* own Scholar, you are ἀνὴρ μικρὸς τὸν νοῦν, your abilities are not ſo good as I preſumed.

But to go on with what I intended, and from which that interloping Queſtion diverted me; that you may the better judge of the nature of *Schiſms* by their occaſions; you ſhall find that all *Schiſms* have crept into the Church by one of theſe three ways; either upon matter of Fact, or matter of Opinion, or point of Ambition. For the firſt; I call that matter of Fact, when ſomething is required to be done by us, which either we know, or ſtrongly

ſuſpect to be unlawful; So the firſt notable *Schiſm*, of which we read in the Church, contained in it matter of Fact; For it being upon Error taken for neceſſary, that an *Easter* muſt be kept; and upon worſe than Error, if I may ſo ſpeak, (for it was no leſs than a point of *Judaiſm*, forced upon the Church,) upon worſe than Error, I ſay, thought further neceſſary, that the ground for the time of our keeping that Feaſt, muſt be the rule left by *Moſes* to the *Jews*; there aroſe a ſtout Queſtion, Whether we were to celebrate with the *Jews*, on the fourteenth Moon, or the *Sunday* following? This matter, though moſt unneceſſary, moſt vain, yet cauſed as great a Combuſtion, as ever was in the Church;

Church; the *Weſt* ſeparating and refuſing Communion with the *Eaſt*, for many years together. In this fantaſtical Hurry, I cannot ſee but all the world were *Schiſmaticks*: neither can any thing excuſe them from that imputation excepting only this, that we charitably ſuppoſe that all Parties out of Conſcience did what they did. A thing which befel them through the ignorance of their Guides, (for I will not ſay their malice) and that through the juſt judgment of God, becauſe through ſloth and blind obedience Men examined not the things which they were taught, but like Beaſts of Burthen patiently couched down, and indifferently underwent whatſoever their Superiours laid upon them. By the way, by this you may plain-

ly ſee the danger of our appeal unto Antiquity, for reſolution in controverted points of Faith, and how ſmall relief we are to expect from thence. For if the diſcretion of the chiefeſt Guides and Directors of the Church, did in a Point ſo trivial, ſo inconſiderable, ſo mainly fail them, as not to ſee the Truth in a Subject, wherein it is the greateſt Marvel how they could avoid the ſight of it; can we without imputation of extream groſneſs and folly, think ſo poor ſpirited perſons, competent Judges of the Queſtions now on foot betwixt the Churches? Pardon me; I know not what Temptation drew that Note from me.

The next *Schiſm*, which had in it matter of Fact, is that of the *Donatiſt*: who was perſwaded (at leaſt

least so he pretended) that it was unlawful to converse or communicate in holy Duties with Men stained with any notorious Sin. (For howsoever *Austin* and others do specify only the *Thurificati & Traditores*, and *Libellatici*, and the like, as if he separated only from those, whom he found to be such; yet by necessary proportion, he must refer to all notorious Sinners) Upon this he taught, that in all places where good and bad were mixt together, there could be no Church, by reason of Pollution, evaporating as it were from Sinners, which blasted righteous Persons who conversed with them, and made all unclean. On this ground separating himself from all whom he list to suspect, he gave out that the Church was no

where

where to be found but in him and his Associates, as being the only Men among whom wicked Persons found no shelter; and by consequence, the only clean and unpolluted Company, and therefore the only Church. Against this Saint *Augustine* laid down this Conclusion, *Unitatem Ecclesiæ per totum Orbem dispersæ propter nonnullorum peccata non esse deserendam*; which is indeed the whole sum of that Fathers Disputation against the *Donatist*. Now in one part of this Controversie betwixt St. *Augustine* and the *Donatist*, there is one thing is very remarkable. The Truth was there where it was by meer chance, and might have been on either side, any Reasons brought by either party notwithstanding. For though it were *de facto* false, that

that *pars Donati*, shut up in *Africk*, was the only Orthodox Party, yet it might have been true, notwithstanding any thing Saint *Austine* brings to confute it; and on the contrary, though it were *de facto* true, that the part of Christians dispersed over the Earth were Orthodox; yet it might have been false notwithstanding any thing Saint *Austine* brings to confirm it. For where, or amongst whom, or amongst how many the Church shall be, or is, is a thing indifferent; it may be in any Number more or less, it may be in any Place Country, or Nation; it may be in All, and (for ought I know) it may be in none, without any prejudice to the definition of the Church, or the Truth of the Gospel. *North* or *South*, many or few, dis-

disperſed in many places, or confined to one; None of theſe either prove or diſprove a Church.

Now this *Schiſm*, and likewiſe the former, to a wiſe Man that well underſtands the matter in Controverſie; may afford perchance matter of pity, to ſee Men ſo ſtrangly diſtracted upon fancy; but of doubt or trouble what to do, it can yield none. For though in this *Schiſm* the *Donatiſt* be the *Schiſmatick*, and in the former both parties be equally engaged in the *Schiſm*; yet you may ſafely upon your occaſions communicate with either, ſo be you flatter neither in their *Schiſm*: For why might it not be lawful to go to Church with the *Donatiſt*, or to celebrate *Eaſter* with the *Quartodeciman*, if occaſion ſo require? ſince neither

neither Nature, nor Religion, nor Reason doth suggest any thing to the contrary: For in all publick Meetings pretending Holiness, so there be nothing done, but what true Devotion and Piety brook, why may not I be present in them, and use Communication with them? Nay what if those to whose care the execution of the publick Service is committed, do something either unseemly or suspicious, or peradventure unlawful? what if the Garments they wear be censured as, nay indeed be superstitious? what if the Gesture of adoration be used at the Altar, as now we have learned to speak? What if the *Homilist* or Preacher deliver any Doctrine, of the truth of which we are not well perswaded, (a thing which very often falls

falls out) yet for all this we may not separate, except we be constrained personally to bear a part in them our selves. The Priests under *Eli* had so ill demeaned themselves about the daily Sacrifice, that the Scriptures tell us, they made it to stink, yet the People refused not to come to the Tabernacle, nor to bring their Sacrifice to the Priest. For in these *Schisms*, which concern Fact, nothing can be a just cause of refusal of Communion, but only to require the execution of some unlawful or suspected act; For not only in Reason, but in Religion too, that Maxim admits of no release, *Cautissimi cujusq; Præceptum quod dubitas, ne feceris.* Long it was ere the Church fell upon *Schism* upon this occasion, though of late

it

it hath had very many; For until the ſecond Council of *Nice*, (in which conciliable Superſtition and Ignorance did conſpire) I ſay, untill that Rout did ſet up Image-worſhip, there was not any remarkable *Schiſm*, upon juſt occaſion of Fact; All the reſt of *Schiſms* of that kind were but Wantonneſs, this was truly ſerious. In this the *Schiſmatical* party was the Synod it ſelf, and ſuch as conſpired with it. For concerning the uſe of Images in *Sacris*, Firſt, it is acknowledged by all, That it is not a thing neceſſary; Secondly, It is by moſt ſuſpected; Thirdly, It is by many held utterly unlawful. Can then the enjoyning of the practice of ſuch a thing be ought elſe but abuſe? Or can the refuſal of Communion here, be thought any other thing

thing than duty? Here, or upon the like occaſion, to ſeparate, may peradventure bring perſonal trouble and danger, (againſt which it concerns every honeſt man to have *Pectus bene præparatum*) further harm it cannot do. So that in theſe caſes, you cannot be to ſeek what to think, or what you have to do.

Come we then to conſider a little of the ſecond ſort of *Schiſm*, ariſing upon occaſion of variety of opinion. It hath been the common diſeaſe of Chriſtians from the beginning, not to content themſelves with that meaſure of Faith, which God and Scriptures have expreſly afforded us; but out of a vain deſire to know more than is revealed, they have attempted to diſcuſs things, of which we can have no light, neither from Reaſon

Reason nor Revelation; neither have they rested here, but upon pretence of Church-authority, which is none, or Tradition, which for the most part is but figment; they have peremptorily concluded, and confidently imposed upon others, a necessity of entertaining Conclusions of that nature; and to strengthen themselves, have broken out into Divisions and Factions, opposing man to man, Synod to Synod, till the peace of the Church vanished, without all possibility of recall. Hence arose those ancient and many separations amongst Christians, occasioned by *Arrianism*, *Eutychianism*, *Nestorianism*, *Photinianism*, *Sabellianism*, and many more both ancient and in our time; all which indeed are but names of *Schism*;

howsoever in the common Language of the Fathers, they were called *Heresies*. For *Heresie* is an act of the Will, not of Reason; and is indeed a Lye, not a mistake: Else how could that known speech of *Austine* go for true, *Errare possum, Hæreticus esse nolo.* Indeed *Manichæism*, *Valentinianism*, *Marcionism*, *Mahometanism*, are truly and properly *Heresies*; For we know that the Authors of them received them not, but minted them themselves, and so knew that which they taught to be a Lye. But can any man avouch that *Arrius* and *Nestorius*, and others that taught erroneously concerning the Trinity, or the Person of our Saviour, did maliciously invent what they taught, and not rather fall upon it by error and mistake? Till that

that be done, and that upon good Evidence, we will think no worſe of all Parties than needs we muſt, and take theſe Rents in the Church to be at the worſt but *Schiſms* upon matter of Opinion. In which caſe what we are to do, is not a point of any great depth of underſtanding to diſcover, ſo be Diſtemper and Partiality do not intervene. I do not yet ſee, that *Opinionum Varietas, & Opinantium Unitas*, are Ἀσυσχέτα, or that Men of different opinions in Chriſtian Religion, may not hold communion in *Sacris*, and both go to one Church. Why may I not go, if occaſion require, to an *Arrian* Church, ſo there be no *Arrianiſm* expreſt in their Liturgy? And were Liturgies and publick Forms of Service ſo framed, as that they

admitted not of particular and private fancies, but contained only ſuch things, as in which all Chriſtians do agree, *Schiſms* on Opinion were utterly vaniſhed. For conſider of all the Liturgies that are or ever have been, and remove from them whatſoever is ſcandalous to any Party, and leave nothing but what all agree on, and the event ſhall be, that the publick Service and Honour of God ſhall no ways ſuffer: Whereas to load our publick Forms with the private Fancies upon which we differ, is the moſt ſovereign way to perpetuate *Schiſm* unto the Worlds end. Prayer, Confeſſion, Thankſgiving, Reading of Scriptures, Expoſition of Scripture, Adminiſtration of Sacraments in the plaineſt and ſimpleſt manner,

were

were matter enough to furnish out a sufficient Liturgy, though nothing either of private Opinion, or of Church Pomp, of Garments, of prescribed Gestures, of Imagery, of Musick, of matter concerning the Dead, of many superfluities, which creep into the Churches under the name of Order and Decency, did interpose it self. For to charge Churches and Liturgies with things unnecessary, was the first beginning of all Superstition, and when scruples of Conscience began to be made or pretended, then Schisms began to break in. If the spiritual Guides and Fathers of the Church would be a little sparing of incumbring Churches with superfluities, and not over-rigid either in reviving obsolete Customs, or imposing new,

there were far less danger of *Schism* or *Superstition*; and all the inconvenience were likely to ensue, would be but this, they should in so doing, yeeld a little to the imbecillities of Inferiors, a thing which St. *Paul* would never have refused to do. Mean while, whereſoever false or suspected Opinions are made a peice of the Church Liturgy, he that separates is not the *Schismatick*; For it is alike unlawful to make profession of known or suspected falshoods, as to put in practice unlawful or suspect actions

The third thing I noted for matter of *Schism* was *Ambition*, I mean *Episcopal Ambition*, shewing it self especially in two heads; one concerning Plurality of *Bishops* in the same See, another the Supe-

Superiority of Bishops in divers Sees. *Aristotle* tells us, that Necessity causeth but small faults, but Avarice and Ambition were the Mothers of great Crimes; *Episcopal Ambition* hath made this true: For no Occasion hath produced more frequent, more continuing, more sanguinary *Schisms*, than this hath done. The Sees of *Alexandria*, of *Constantinople*, of *Antioch*, and above all of *Rome*, do abundantly shew thus much, and our Ecclesiastical Stories witness no less, of which the greatest part consists in the factionating and tumultuating of great and potent *Bishops*. *Socrates* Apologizing for himself, that professing to write an Ecclesiastical Story, he did oftimes interlace the actions of secular Princes and other civil busi-

neſſes tells us that he did thus to refreſh his Reader, who otherwiſe were in danger to be cloyd by reading ſo much of the Acts of unquiet and unruly Biſhops, ἐν οἷς καὶ ἀλλήλων ἐτύρευσαν, in which as a man might ſay, they made *Butter* and *Cheeſe* one of another; For τυρεύειν, (that I may ſhew you a caſt out of my old Office, and open you a Myſtery in Grammar) properly ſignifieth to make Butter and Cheeſe: Now becauſe theſe are not made without much agitation of the Milk, hence τυρεύειν, by a borrowed and tranſlated ſignification, ſignifies to do things with much agitation and tumult.

But that I may a little conſider of the two heads, which I but now ſpecified; The firſt I mentioned was the *Pluralitie of Biſhops* in one Sea.

Sea. For the general practice of the Church from the beginning, at least since the original of Episcopacy, as now it is, was never to admit at once more than one Bishop in one Sea; And so far in this point have they been careful to preserve unity, that they would not suffer a Bishop in his Sea to have two Cathedral Churches; which thing lately brought us a Book out of *France*, *De Monogamia Episcoporum*, written by occasion of the Bishop of *Langres*, who, I know not upon what fancy, could not be content with one Cathedral Church in his Diocess, but would needs have two, which to the Author of that work seems to be a kind of spiritual Polygamy. It fell out amongst the Ancients very often; sometimes upon occasion

caſion of difference in Opinion, ſometimes becauſe of difference amongſt thoſe who were intereſſed in the choice of Biſhops, that two Biſhops and ſometimes more were ſet up, and all Parties ſtriving to maintain their own Biſhop, made themſelves ſeveral Churches, ſeveral Congregations, each refuſing to participate with others, and many times proceeding to mutual Excommunication. This is that which *Cyprian* calls *Erigere Altare contra Altare*: to this doth he impute the Original of all Church diſorders; and if you read him, you would think he thought no other Church-Tumult to be a *Schiſm* but this. This perchance might plead ſome excuſe; For though in regard of Religion it ſelf, it matters not whether there

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be one or more Bishops in the same Diocess, and sometimes two are known to have sat at once (for *Epiphanius* reckoning up the Bishops of *Rome*, makes *Peter* and *Paul* the first: and St. *Austin* acknowledgeth, that for a time he sat fellow Bishop with his Predecessor, though he excuseth it, that he did so by being ignorant that the contrary had been decreed by the Council of *Nice*,) yet it being a thing very convenient for the Peace of the Church to have it so; neither doth it any way savour of vice or misdemeanor; their Punishment sleeps not, who unnecessarily and wantonly go about to infringe it.

But that other Head of *Episcopal Ambition*, concerning *Supremacy of Bishops* in divers Sees, one claiming

ing Superiority over another, as it hath been from time to time, a great Trespasser against the Churches Peace, so it is now the finall Ruine of it. The *East* and the *West*, through the fury of the two prime Bishops, being irremediably separated without all hope of Reconcilement. And besides all this mischief, it is founded in a vice contrary to all Christian humility, without which no man shall see his Saviour; For they do but abuse themselves and others, that would perswade us, that Bishops, by Christ's Institution, have any Superiority over other men, further than of Reverence; or that any Bishop is Superiour to another, further than positive order agreed upon amongst Christians, hath prescribed. For we have believed

lieved him that hath told us, *That in Jeſus Chriſt there is neither high nor low; and that in giving honour, every man ſhould be ready to prefer another before himſelf*; which ſayings cut off all claim moſt certainly to Superiority, by title of Chriſtianity; except men can think that theſe things were ſpoken only to poor and private Men. Nature and Religion agree in this, that neither of them hath a hand in this Heraldry of *ſecundum ſub & ſupra*; all this comes from Compoſition and Agreement of men among themſelves. Wherefore this abuſe of Chriſtianity, to make it Lacquey to Ambition, is a vice for which I have no extraordinary name of Ignominy, and an ordinary I will not give it, leſt you ſhould take ſo tranſcendent a vice to be but trivial. Now

Now conceming *Schiſm* ariſing upon theſe Heads, you cannot be for behaviour much to ſeek; for you may ſafely communicate with all Parties as Occaſion ſhall call you, and the *Schiſmaticks* here are all thoſe who are heads of the Faction, together with all thoſe who foment it: for private and indifferent Perſons, they may be Spectators of theſe contentions as ſecurely in regard of any peril of Conſcience (for of danger in Purſe or Perſon, I keep no account) as at a Cock fight. Where Serpents fight, who cares who hath the better? the beſt Wiſh is, that both may periſh in the fight.

Now for Conventicles, of the nature of which you deſire to be informed, thus much in general.

It evidently appears, that all Meetings upon unnecessary Occasions of Separation are to be so stiled, so that in this sense, a Conventicle is nothing else but a Congregation of *Schismaticks*; Yet Time hath taken leave sometimes to fix this Name upon good and honest Meetings, and that perchance not altogether without good reason; For with publick Religious Meetings thus it fares: First, it hath been at all times confessed necessary, that God requires not only inward and private Devotion, when Men either in their hearts and Closets, or within their private walls, pray, praise, confess and acknowledge; but he further requires all those things to be done in Publick, by troops and shoals of Men, and from hence have pro-

proceeded publick Temples, Altars, Forms of Service, appointed Times, and the like, which are required for open Assemblies; yet whilst men were truly pious, all Meetings of men for mutual help of Piety and Devotion, whersoever and by whomsoever celebrated, were permitted without exception.

But when it was espied that ill affected persons abus'd private Meetings, whether Religious or Civil, to evil ends, Religiousness to gross impiety, (as appears in the *Ethnick Eleusinia*, and *Bacchanalia*; and Christian Meetings under the Pagan Princes, when for fear they durst not come together in open view, were charged with foul imputations, as by the report of Christians themselves plainly appears;

pears; and Civil Meetings many times under pretence of friendly and neighbourly Viſits, ſheltered treaſonable Attempts againſt Princes and Common-weals:) Hence both Church and State joyned, and jointly gave order for Forms, Times, Places of Publick Concourſe, whether for Religious or Civil Ends; and all other Meetings whatſoever, beſides thoſe of which both Time and Place were limited, they cenſured for Routs and Riots, and unlawful Aſſemblies in the State, and in the Church for Conventicles.

So that it is not lawful, no not for Prayer, for Hearing, for Conference, for any other Religious Office whatſoever, for people to aſſemble otherwiſe, than by Publick Order is allowed. Neither

may we complain of this in Times of Incorruption, for why should men desire to do that suspiciously in private, which warrantably may be performed in publick? But in Times of manifest Corruptions and Persecutions, wherein Religious Assembling is dangerous, private Meetings, howsoever besides publick Order, are not only lawful, but they are of Necessity and Duty; else how shall we excuse the Meetings of Christians for publick Service, in time of danger and persecutions, and of our selves in Queen *Maries* days? and how will those of the *Roman* Church amongst us, put off the imputation of Conventicling, who are known amongst us privately to assemble for Religious Exercise against all established or-

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der, both in State and Church? For indeed all pious Assemblies in times of persecution and corruptions howsoever practised, are indeed, or rather alone the lawful Congregations; and publick Assemblies, though according to form of Law, are indeed nothing else but Riots and Conventicles, if they be stained with Corruption, and Superstition.

FINIS.

Miſcellanies

WRITTEN

By the ever Memorable

Mr. *JOHN HALES*,

of *Eaton-Colledge*, &c.

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Miſcellanies.

How to know the Church.

MArks and Notes to know the Church there are none, except we will make True Profeſſion, which is the Form and Eſſence of the Church to be a Mark. And as there are none, ſo is it not neceſſary there ſhould be. For to what purpoſe ſhould they ſerve? That I might go ſeek and find out ſome Company to mark. This is no

way neceſſary. For glorious Things are in the Scriptures ſpoken of the Church: not that I ſhould run up and down the World to find the perſons of the Profeſſors; but that I ſhould make my ſelf of it. This I do by taking upon me the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and ſubmitting my ſelf to the Rules of Belief, and Practice, delivered in the Goſpel, though beſides my ſelf, I knew no other Profeſſor in the World. If this were not the Authors end in propoſal of the Title, it is but a meer Vanity.

To the Deſcription of the Church.

The Church, as it imports a viſible Company in Earth, is nothing

nothing elſe but the Company of Profeſſors of Chriſtianity, whereſoever diſperſt in the Earth. To define it thus by Monarchy, under one viſible Head, is of novelty crept up, ſince men began to change the ſpiritual Kingdom of Chriſt to ſecular Pride and Tyranny, and a thing never heard of, either in the Scriptures, or in the Writings of the Ancients. Government, whether by one or many, or howſoever, if it be one of the Churches contingent Attributes, it is all; certainly it is no neceſſary Property, much leſs comes it into the Definition and Eſſence of it. I mean outward Government; for as for inward Government, by which Chriſt reigns in the Hearts of his Elect, and vindicates them from ſpiritual

Enemies,

Enemies, I have no occaſion to ſpeak, neither ſee I any reference to it in all your Authors Animadverſions.

How Chriſt is the Head of the Church.

From the Worlds beginning, till the laſt hour of it, the Church is eſſentially one and the ſame, howſoever perchance in Garment, and outward Ceremony, it admits of Difference. And as it was from the beginning of the World, ſo was it Chriſtian; there being no other difference betwixt the Fathers before Chriſt and us, but this, As we believe in Chriſt that *is Come*, ſo they believed in Chriſt that *was to Come*. *Jeſus Chriſt yeſterday, and to day*

day, and the ſame for ever. Reference unto Chriſt is the very Eſſence of the Church, and there neither is, nor ever was any Church but Chriſt's; and therefore the Church amongſt the *Jews* was properly and truly *Chriſtian, quoad rem,* as we are. Now as this Church at all times is Chriſt's Body, ſo is Chriſt the Head of it. For it is as impoſſible for the Church, as for the Body to be without its Head; it is not therefore as your Author dreams. Chriſt came not to found a New Church, or to profeſs a Viſible Headſhip of it. That Relation to this Church, which we expreſs when we call him the Head of it, is one and the ſame, from the Beginning to all Eternity, neither receives it any alteration in this reſpect, becauſe the Perſon

Perſon in whom this Relation is founded, is ſometimes Viſible, ſometimes not. 'Tis true indeed, the Head of the Church ſometimes became Viſible, but this is but contingent and by Concomitancy. For Chriſt the ſecond Perſon in the Trinity, becoming Man to Redeem this Church, and manifeſt the way of Truth unto it; It ſo fell out that the Head of the Church became Viſible. Of this Viſibility he left no Succeſſor, no Doctrine, no Uſe, as being a thing meerly accidental: I ask, Had the Church before Chriſt any Viſible Head? if it had, then was not Chriſt the firſt, as here our Teacher tells us; If it had none, why then ſhould the Church more require a Viſible Head, than it did from the Beginning. To ſpeak

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the Truth at once. All theſe Queſtions concerning the Notes, the Viſibility, the Government of the Church, if we look upon the Subſtance and Nature of the Church, they are meerly Idle and Impertinent : If upon the End, why Learned Men do handle them, it is nothing elſe but Faction.

Of Peter's *Miniſterial Headſhip of the Church.*

In your Authors Paragraphs concerning the viſible Encreaſe, or Succeſſion of the Church, there is no Difference betwixt us. As for the Proofs of *Peters* Miniſterial Headſhip, this firſt concerning his being the *Rock* of the Church,

that cannot prove it; For *Peter* was the *Rock* then, when our Saviour ſpake, but then could he not be the viſible Head, for Chriſt himſelf then was living, and by our Teachers Doctrine, ſupplied that room himſelf. *Peter* therefore, howſoever, or in what ſence ſoever he were the *Rock*, yet could he not be the viſible Head, except we will grant the Church to have had two viſible Heads at once.

Secondly, The Keys of Heaven committed to *Peter*, and Command to feed his Sheep, import no more, than that common Duty, laid upon all the Diſciples, *To teach all Nations*; for this Duty in ſeveral reſpects, is expreſt by ſeveral Metaphors. *Teaching*, as it ſignifies the opening of the

way

way to life, ſo is it called by the name of *Keys*; but as it ſignifies the Strengthning of the Soul of Man by the Word, which is the Souls ſpiritual Food, ſo is it called *Feeding*. Thus much is ſeen by the Defenders of the Church of *Rome*, and therefore they fly for refuge to a Circumſtance: It is obſerved, that our Saviour delivered this Doctrine to *Peter* alone (as indeed ſometimes he did) in this it is ſuppoſed that ſome great Myſtery reſts: For why ſhould our Saviour thus ſingle out *Peter*, and commend a common Duty to him, if there were not ſomething extraordinary in it, which concerned Him above the reſt? This they interpret a Preeminence that *Peter* had in his Buſineſs of Teaching, which they

they ſay is a Primacy and Headſhip; inforcing thus much, that all the reſt were to depend from Him, and from Him receive what they were to preach. For Anſwer, Grant me there were ſome great Myſtery in it, yet whence is it proved, that this is that Myſtery? For if our Saviour did not manifeſt it, then might there be a thouſand Cauſes, which Mans Conjecture may eaſily miſs: It is great boldneſs, out of Cauſes concealed, to pick ſo great Conſequences, and to found Matters of ſo great weight upon meer Conjectures.

Thirdly, The Prayer for Confirmation of *Peters* Faith, whence it came, the Courſe of the Story ſet down in the Text doth ſhew, It was our Saviours Previſion of

Peters

Peters danger to relapſe, which danger he had certainly run into, had not our Saviour extraordinarily prayed for confirmation of his Faith. And the Precept of confirming his Brethren, is but that charitable Office, which is exacted at every Chriſtians hand, that when himſelf had eſcaped ſo great a Wrack, to be careful in warning and reclaiming others, whom common frailty drives into the like Diſtreſs.

Theſe Circumſtances, that *Peter* is firſt named amongſt the Diſciples, that he made the firſt Sermon, and the like, are too weak Grounds to build the Soveraignty over the World upon; and that he ſpake *Ananias* and *Sapphira* dead, argues ſpiritual Power, but not temporal. But

that *Peter* called the firſt Council in the *Acts*, is a Circumſtance beyond the Text; for concerning the calling of the Council there is no word, all that is ſaid is but this, *that the Diſciples and Elders met*, no Syllable of *Peters* calling them together.

That *Peter* was 25 Years Biſhop of *Rome*, is not to be proved out of Antiquity, before St. *Hierom*, who ſhuffled it into *Euſebius* Chronicle, there being no ſuch thing extant in his Story. Yea that he was Biſhop at all (as now the name of Biſhop is taken) may be very queſtionable: For the Ancients that reckon up the Biſhops of *Rome* until their times, as *Euſebius*, and before him *Tertullian*, and before them both *Iræneus*, never account *Peter* as Biſhop

ſhop of that See: And *Epiphanius* tells us, that *Peter* and *Paul* were both Biſhops of *Rome* at once; by which it is plain he took the Title of Biſhop in another ſence than now it is uſed: For now, and ſo for a long time upward, two Biſhops can no more poſſeſs one See, than two Hedge-Sparrows dwell in one Buſh. St. *Peters* time was a little too early for Biſhops to riſe.

Anſwer to the Biſhop of Romes *Practice of Supremacy.*

To the firſt, That ſo many of the Biſhops of *Rome* were Martyrs, what makes that to the purpoſe? Is Martyrdom an Ar-

gument of the Supremacy?

To the ſecond, That *Victor* indeavoured to excommunicate the *Aſiatick* Biſhops, is true; but withall it is as true, that he was withſtood for his Labour: For the Biſhops of *Aſia* themſelves did ſharply reprove him, πλημμελέστερον καὶ θαττον μένων, the Words of *Euſebius*; and *Irenæus* wrote againſt him for it.

To the third, That the firſt four Councils were called by the Popes, is an open Falſhood, for in the two firſt, the Biſhops of *Rome* are not ſo much as mentioned, ſave only as perſons cited. In the two laſt they are mentioned only as Petitioners to the Emperour. There are extant the Stories of *Euſebius*, *Socrates*, *Ruffinus*, *Theodoret*, *Sozomenus*, *the Acts of the Councils*

Councils themſelves, at leaſt ſome of them, *the Writings and Epiſtles of Leo Biſhop of Rome*. In all theſe there is not one word of the *Pope* farther than a Supplicant, and the whole calling of the Biſhops together is attributed to the Emperour. Take for Example but the laſt of them. *Leo*, Biſhop of *Rome*, was deſirous that ſome things done in a meeting of Divines at *Epheſus*, ſhould be diſannulled; for this he becomes a Suitor to *Theodoſius* the *junior*, to have a General Council, but could never procure it of him. After his death he continues his ſuit to *Marcianus*, Succeſſor to *Theodoſius*, who granted his requeſt; But whereas *Leo* had requeſted the Council might be held in *Italy*, the Emperor would not hear him; nay which is more, the Pope upon good reaſon, had beſought

ſought the Emperor to put off the day deſign'd for the holding of the Council, but the Emperor would not hear him. So that *Leo* could do nothing, neither for the calling the Council, nor for the Place, nor for the Time. And all this appears by *Leo's* own Epiſtles. If the Popes could do ſo little well near 500 years after Chriſt, how little could they do before, when their horns were not yet ſo long.

The Plea of the Proteſtants concerning the Corruption of the Church of *Rome*, which by them is confeſſed ſometimes to have been pure, is no more prejudicial to Chriſts Promiſe to his Church, *that the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt her*, than the known corruption of the Churches in *Aſia* in St. *Johns* time, or of other Churches after.

The Cloſe of all is a Demonſtration.

tion. A Word unfortunately uſed by your Author, to bewray his Logick: For indeed a Reaſon drawn from ſo poor and empty a ſign, falls many bows wide of demonſtrative Proof. Firſt, it is falſe that all the reſt of Patriarchal Sees are extinct. The See of *Conſtantinople* yet ſtands, and ſhews her Succeſſion of Biſhops from St. *Andrew* till this day, as well as the Church of *Rome* can from St. *Peter*: The See of *Alexandria* yet ſubſiſts, and the Biſhop of that place calls him, Κρίτην τῆς οἰκουμένης, Judge of the World, (as my ſelf have ſeen in ſome of his Letters) a Title to which he hath as good Right, as the Biſhop of *Rome* hath to be the Worlds Sovereign. If any reply they are poor, in miſery, in perſecution and affliction: this can make no difference, ſince with Chriſt there is neither *rich* nor *poor*, but

but a new Creature. And again, their caſe now is as good as was the Biſhops of *Rome*, under the *Ethnick* Emperors; for their Lot then was no other than thoſe Biſhops is now. But grant that it had laſted longeſt, what then? ſome of them muſt needs have conſiſted longer than the other, except we would ſuppoſe that they ſhould have fallen all together. Peradventure the reaſon of her ſo long laſting is no other, but that which the *Cyclops* gives *Ulyſſes* in *Homer*, ὑστατον μὲν ἔτιν, Ulyſſes *ſhould be eaten laſt of all.* However it be, this Vaunt ſeems but like that of the wicked Servant in the Goſpel, *tardat Dominus venire*, and we doubt not but a day of the Lord ſhall overtake him who now eats and drinks, and revels with the World, and beats his fellow Servants.

FINIS.